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# the Monster Times

**SCI-FI COMICS**  
PAGE 28

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**STAR TREK  
VERSUS  
SPACE 1999**

FLASH GORDON P.3

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TMT  
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**NEXT ISSUE!**


Next time out, THE MONSTER TIMES will be staying on the science-fiction track with a special issue devoted to the ongoing BIONIC BOOM. Sci-fi scholar Tom Rogers will be guest-editing much of this timely edition of TMT, one that will feature, among other exciting items, an in-depth look at THE SIX MILLION DOLLAR MAN, replete with biographies of the series' stars, episode-by-episode critiques of each of the show's seasons, and much fascinating background information on the genesis of the series. Detailed coverage of the new BIONIC WOMAN series, a history of Camacho's popular cyborg, DEATH ON THE DEMOLISHER, and other intriguing topics relevant to the Wonderful World of Bionics.

Our upcoming Cyborg Special will also include a feature on BIONIC REALITIES, diving for the first time anywhere, how much the SIX MILLION DOLLAR MAN would REALLY cost. In addition to these Bionic-oriented features, all the regular TMT columns will also be on board, including our ever-informative Telepage, always popular Monster Scene, plus all kinds of film and book reviews AND updates on the progress of the STAR TREK MOVIE, THE KING KONG remake, and the proposed SUPERMAN film.

Active readers will notice that we have not as yet mentioned all the sinister surprises that will also appear in our upcoming Cyborg Special—but rest assured that they'll be in there too. Remember, flesh-and-blood people may be all right in their place, but they're certainly no substitute for the real thing.



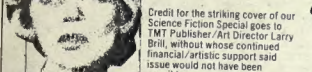
# the Monster Times



As our cover this issue indicates, this is a special All-Science-Fiction edition of THE MONSTER TIMES. And foremost on the minds of sci-fi fans everywhere are the prospects for ITC's SPACE: 1999 series and the fate of Gene Roddenberry's ongoing attempts to lens a gala STAR TREK feature film that will spark enough media interest to restore that late, lamented series to the tube. In order to get all the latest sci-fi facts, we sent Media Editor R. Allen Leider to investigate both projects, and we think you'll find his discussions with STAR's Gene Roddenberry and SPACE stars Martin Landau and Barbara Bain to be of more than passing interest.

And along the way, just to touch as many fascinating sci-fi bases as possible, you'll encounter the likes of several dissident Humanoids and other arresting denizens of Science Fiction Land. So check your phasers at the door and get on board.





Welcome to the Weird World of Science Fiction, where anything can happen and occasionally does. Your friendly fiends at TMT have, as per usual, spared neither time nor expense (within, of course, reason) in assembling this Special sci-fi edition of *THE MONITOR*. And a wide-ranging issue it is, if we do say so ourselves. It covers (as it should) the past, present, and future, as well as fully availing itself of the vast reaches of the cosmos-as-we-know-it. As loyal readers of this brief editorial space to you (and to many words) the information given in the Table of Contents to your immediate right. And so because this is a special farsighted all-SF issue, we do not reason to alter that venerable TMT tradition here.

Blasting off this spaceblazing issue is sci-fi series scholar Tom Rogers' gripping filmbook tribute to that Once and Future King of the Sci-Fi Series: **FLASH GORDON**, in which Flash pits wits against the Merciless, the screen's most memorable Yellow Peril. In the sci-fi scoop department, we have R. Allen Leider's exclusive interview with Gene Roddenberry, who provides all the latest advance info on the progress of the proposed **STAR TREK** movie, and the corresponding's profile on the controversial **SPACE: 1999** series, replete with candid conversations with Martin Landau and Barbara Bain. Also on board are Jason Thomas' fond look at what many rank as the best SF film of all time, Fritz Lang's **METROPOLIS**; S.A. Statter's look at **GEORGE MELIES**, founding Father of the Science-Fiction Film; and sci-fi filmmaker-critic J. Hoberman's 10 FAVORITE SCI-FI FILMS (And Why He Likes Them); Joe Kane's look at our ongoing SF classic, **CREATION OF THE HUMANOIDS**; and other sci-fi items eye-opening in nature.

For comics fans, we've got Howard Phillips' fond recollection of Tower Comics' late, great T.H.U.N.D.E.R. AGENTS series, and Ron Haycock on SCIENCE FICTION MOVIE COMICS. And for you reality buffs, we have investigative reporter Rex Weiner's inquiry into the mysterious CULT OF CHAOS, a bizarre political movement inadvertently inspired by sci-fi scribe Norman Spinrad's novel, AGENT OF CHAOS. That, of course, is not to mention all manner of sci-fi surprises, both real and surreal, also unearthed in this issue.

Before we board this Science Fiction Special, our One Good Turn Dept. would like to extend its thanks to CBS-TV for granting this publication prominent mention in its WHAT'S THE LOCH NESS MONSTER ALL ABOUT?, a televised study of mythical monsters aired at 1:30 this Saturday, February 14th past. We'd also like to thank critic Rob Comorosky for the glowing review of TMT he wrote in his syndicated newspaper column. Thanks, Rob.

And while we're dishing out the kudos, we'd also like to save at least one for ourselves for putting together this typically better-than-ever sci-fi edition of TMT. If it accomplishes nothing else, we'd like to think this issue will at least serve as yet another reminder that there exist things never dreamt of in ANY of our philosophies.

# the Monster Times

**The World's First Newspaper of Horror,  
Sci-Fi and Fantasy**

**3 FLASH AND FANTASY!:** Sci-fi serial scholar Tom Rogers celebrates **FLASH GORDON**'s 40th anniversary in films with this thrilling filmbook rendition of the original 1936 Universal serial

**6 T.H.U.N.D.E.R. STRIKES AGAIN!:** Comics maven Howard Phillips casts a fond backwards glance at the late, lamented **T.H.U.N.D.E.R. AGENTS**, one of Comicdom's best sci-fi-cum-superhero series.

**10 SPACE: 1999 REVISITED!:** Media Editor R. Allen Leider takes an indepth look at the strongest challenger to **STAR TREK's** TV SF throne and talks with stars Martin Landau and Barbara Bain

**10 STAR TREK MOVIE MOVES CLOSER TO SCREEN!:** So says **STAR TREK** mentor Gene Roddenberry, who discusses the progress of the eagerly awaited **STAR TREK** film project with our own R. Allen Leider.

**13 THE BIG 2000 A.D. BIRTHDAY BOOK!:** Staff curmudgeon Dean Latimer aims his critical raygun at Jacques Sadoul's *2000 A.D.*, a treasure chest of futuristic cheesecake illos from pulp novels past.

**15 KUNG-FU KING ENTERS FRIGHT FILM RING!**  
TMT previews Kung-Fu filmmaker Run Run Shaw's first forays into the fright film genre the SF-slanted **SUPER INFRAMAN** and the more traditionally horrific **BLACK MAGIC**.

**19 THE CULT OF CHAOS:**  
TMT investigative reporter Rex Weiner unravels the strange facts in the case of science-fiction scribe Norman Spinrad and the mysterious Cult of Chaos.

**TOP TEN SCI-FI FILMS OF ALL-TIME!**  
Underground filmmaker-critic J. Hoberman kicks off a new TMT 10 Best feature with a lively round-up of his favorite selections from the Science Fiction Cinema

**21 THE MAGIC OF MELIES!**  
Georges Melies maven S.A. Star contributes this informative profile on France's first authentic auteur and the Founding Father of the Science Fiction Film.

**23 SCI-FI MOVIE COMICS!:** Ron Haydock resumes his sporadic series on comic book adaptations of fright films, this time focusing his critical attention on sci-fi offerings.

**24 THE TMT TELETYPE FROM BEYOND TIME:**  
Being all the latest news from the World of Fright, including a special critique of recent sci-fi TV movies, a **KING KONG** remake update and other eerie items

**SCI-FI'S FINEST HOUR (AND SOME ODD MINUTES)!**  
Jason Thomas journeys back a full half-century to recount what many critics hail as the finest science-fiction film ever made, Fritz Lang's masterful **METROPOLIS**



have been written by H.G. Wells. As any SF fan knows, it was written by Philip Wylie.

You're right; we're wrong. WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE was based on a novel by Philip Wylie and Edwin Balmer. We stand not only corrected, but chastened and chagrined to boot.

### Machiavellian Missive

As I read "The Life and Crimes of the Real Dracula" I thought that if I read the word "Machiavellian" in reference to The Count once more I would throw up. Well, I did, and I did. Your ignorance of Niccolò Machiavelli is obviously voluminous. If he were the world's worst fiend, as you imply by using his name as exemplary, then Mary Poppins sold dope to eight-year-olds. If he was the worst Man has to offer, we would all be a lot safer from each other.

The term "Machiavellian" is, first of all, an ANTI-ITALIANISM coined by the French, and based on a double lie: (1) that Machiavelli was inordinately wicked, and (2) that all Italians were just like him. This was, as one may guess, an imperialistic propaganda device. France wanted to absorb Italy, and found it convenient to play the same game as Hitler with the Jews, or the Church with the "infidels" in Palestine.

In fact, Niccolò's image as a cruel cynic was cultivated by him as a joke on his contemporaries. In his writings, simple political realism is couched in phrases that struck horror in the hearts of his fellow humanists at the time. However, his later works and a review of his life reveal that he did not really mean it the way he said, and that he never really did anything to deserve his reputation. Most translators, in view of this, edit out the nastiness in the

I assume from these facts that: (1) either you read Italian, you have read Machiavelli's early work and have not seen his later writing, that you know nothing else about him, and you have accepted his reputation on the basis of what little you know of him, or (2) you have not read Machiavelli's work at all, that you have accepted his reputation at face value, on the second of your **total ignorance** of the facts. The second assumption would lead me to conclude that you are a bigot.

Mr. Latimer—who, contrary to popular belief, is emphatically NOT a member of the Anti-Italian Pro-Demolition League—replies: "Machiavellian," quoth the American College Dictionary: "characterized by subtle or insidious cunning." He is listed as an objective, not an 'anti-Italianism.' I'll use any pejorative adjectives I want to, Jack, bigoted or not. As for Niccolò, while it's

genuine saintliness breathes through every word he ever wrote—INCLUDING his 'early work' like *THE PRINCE*, of which all Italians may be rightfully proud—it's also a fact that his earliest and heaviest detractors were the Medics. It certainly wasn't the FRENCH who jailed him and crippled him with torture, but other Italians. And finally, I've read his later stuff too—*LA MANDRAGOLA*, there's a spicy bit of trash for you—I remain resolutely biogated in SPITE of it.<sup>6</sup>

**"Spaced"-Out**

To the Editor... I have recently viewed 3 episodes of **SPACE: 1999**. It is by far the worst piece of junk I have ever seen. The show tried to follow in the footsteps of **STAR TREK**. Unfortunately, **STAR TREK** is stepping all over that crummy show. Thanks for your views on **STAR TREK**. I love your paper, I love it, LOVE IT!

Bill Stratton

For other views of SPACE: 1999, check out Media Editor R. Allen Leider's interview with the SPACE crew and Gene Roddenberry's remarks on page 18 of this issue.

To the Editor...  
Your newspaper is great, but you have made a mistake. In issue #45, page 28, there is a still of 'Bela Lugosi' in **PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE**. The marks around the name of Mr. Lugosi are no mistake, because it is not he who is pictured there, but his double. You see, Mr. Lugosi died halfway through the film and his stunt double was used for the rest.

There is just one other thing I would like to say. The cutout of Kong on page 25 is truly terrible work. He looked like a mixture of The Blob and the Green Slime. Otherwise your pub-

Shawn Hunter  
Burleson, Texas

Got a gripe? Somethin' you want to get off your hairy chest? Or, perchance, a nice note of praise for your friendly fiends at TNT? Then send them straight to us. Remember: It takes all kinds ... and so do we. Address all correspondences to: To the Editor, THE MONSTER TIMES, Box 595, Old Chelsea

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**Dear Errata**

I enjoyed the article "The Many Deaths of Dracula" by Tom Rogers in your All-Vampire Issue (#46). However, I have a few errors I would like to call to your attention:

The final scene of **HORROR OF DRACULA** does not take place in an abandoned church, but in Dracula's castle itself. Who could force Peter Cushing through a huge room into the castle, up the stairs and into the huge room, and finally Cushing tearing the drapes from the window letting in the sunlight, turning Dracula into a pile of dust? This was one of the greatest scenes ever.

Also, Christopher Lee did not play Dracula in all the Hammer films. Remember **THE BRIDES OF DRACULA**? David Peel did a fantastic job as Dracula in this film, in my opinion second only to Lee.

only to HORROR OF DRACULA. Bob Baublitz, York, Pennsylvania

Mr. Rogers replies: "You're right about HORROR OF DRACULA, but wrong about BRIDES OF DRACULA. BRIDES OF DRACULA was not a film about Dracula himself but one of his disciples; the Count himself never appeared therein. By the way, I agree with you that it was indeed a good film."

**More Mistakes**  
To the Editor...  
In issue #46, in the MONSTER TIMES  
Teletype, **WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE** is said to

Charles E. Quick  
Blythe, Georgia

Got a gripe? Somethin' you want to get off your hairy chest? Or, perchance, a nice note of praise for your friendly fiends at TMT? Then send them straight to us. Remember: It takes all kinds ... and so do we. Address all correspondences to: To the Editor, THE MONSTER TIMES, Box 505, Old Chatham





While many folks are touting 1976 as the 200th Birthday of these United States, for sci-fi fans the year marks a date far more auspicious than the birth of a mere nation—i.e., the 40th anniversary of the first FLASH GORDON serial. Yes, it was fully forty years ago that Universal brought to the serial screen their first adaptation of Alex Raymond's celebrated comic strip, outfitting action star Buster Crabbe with then-futuristic space gear and packing him off to the dread planet Mongo for stirring encounters with Ming the Merciless, the Fire Dragon, horned apes, evil minions and other fanciful foes. Here to recount those bygone days, in line filmbook fashion, is TMT sci-fi serial scholar Tom Rogers...

### 1. THE PLANET OF PERIL!

Earth is in turmoil!

The merciless fury of floods, fires, earthquakes, hurricanes and huge tidal waves imperil the entire planet. Humanity fears for its very existence as atmospheric disturbances threaten to tear the world apart. Professor Gordon, a famed astronomer, realizes that the disasters are being caused by a planetoid that has recently entered the solar system. It is on a collision course with earth, whose gravitational field has been upset by the speeding alien force. Unless the trouble-maker changes direction, both planets will be destroyed.

Professor Gordon's son, Flash, is flying to join his father. Lovely Dale Arden is also on board the small passenger plane. Suddenly, a fierce storm makes it necessary for the travelers to bail out. When Dale experiences difficulty, Flash grabs her and they parachute to safety

together. They land near a strange-looking aircraft, and bearded Dr. Zarkov appears, holding a pistol on them. Zarkov is a scientific genius who intends to journey by rocketship to the approaching planetoid and divert its calamitous course. Flash and Dale talk this over and decide to accompany him on the hazardous trip.

The trio blasts off, and death nearly claims them when the eccentric scientist forgets to turn on the oxygen supply. Without further mishap, the ship reaches its destination and breaks through the clouds of Mongo, the danger-laden gypsy planet.

After landing the rocket, the Earthlings disembark and discover they do not need space suits because of the tolerable atmosphere. Suddenly, two huge dinosaurs show up and begin fighting over who gets to eat the humans. Fortunately, another airship appears, and it quickly emits a ray which eliminates the oversized iguanas.

Flash, Zarkov and Dale are taken prisoner by Officer Torch, leader of the "robo-men." In the course of an audience with Emperor Ming, it is learned that the evil ruler is purposely guiding Mongo toward Earth, the first step in his mad plan to conquer the universe. After just a few moments' discussion, the Fu-Manchu-like tyrant decides to: (a) conquer earth instead of destroying it; (b) kill Flash; (c) "employ" Zarkov; and (d) marry Dale. Princess Aura, Ming's beautiful daughter, is not at all pleased with the decision regarding Flash, because she wants him for herself.

Poor Flash soon finds himself thrust into a large cage, where he is attacked by three fanged Monkey-Men. The ferocious beasts close in on the weaponless athlete, but he succeeds in beating them after a wild struggle. Aura joins him, and Flash now has to fight off several soldiers. Ming, determined to kill our hero, orders him to be cast into "the Pit." Aura, armed with a hand raygun, shoots the guard who is

FEET  
DON'T FAIL  
US NOW...



Flash Gordon and Dale Arden hastily exit the scene of the above crimes, but their mishaps on the mad planet Mongo are only beginning.

obediently reaching for a control lever. The man succeeds in opening a trap door in the floor, through which Flash and his impetuous companion promptly plummet. A den of hungry, gruesome reptiles waits below them!

### 2. THE TUNNEL OF TERROR!

Ming, however, concerned about his daughter, saves Flash and Aura by having a guard use an automatic net to catch them. He observes the rescue on his control panel, and sends Torch and his men to capture them. As the soldiers approach, Aura locates a door leading to some underground caverns. The two make their way to a waiting rocketship, and

Aura leaves Flash inside while she returns to the palace.

Meanwhile, back at his new laboratory, Zarkov is discussing the vast power of radioactive energy with Ming. Afterward, the High Priest of the Great God Tao is instructed by Ming to use the "dehumanizer" to hypnotize Dale so that she will consent to wed the evil emperor. The order is quickly carried out.

Back at Flash's rocket, an alarm sounds, and the earthman witnesses a fleet of gyro-ships (rotating, top-like aircraft) approaching. Without hesitation, he takes off and attacks the airborne armada. Upon destroying a few of his opponents, Flash's lone aircraft smashes into the enemy's lead ship. Locked together, they spin wildly to the ground and crash. Bearded Prince Thun, leader of the Lion-men, survives the crack-up, as does Flash. They duel, but Flash wins and spares Thun's life. As they watch the skies, Ming's air fleet arrives, and, after a short battle, the invaders are driven off.

Flash and Thun make their way to Zarkov's lab by way of a secret passage. There, Flash searches for Dale on a television known as a "spaceograph" and learns that she is about to marry the insidious Emperor Ming. As he and Thun race to stop the ceremony, the sacred gong is struck; when the 13th stroke is heard, the wedding ceremony will be completed. On the way to the rescue, Flash and Thun are attacked by a small detachment of enemy soldiers. Flash breaks through, and he soon comes to a mammoth cave. As he enters, a gooko (a dragon with lobster-like claws) advances toward him. The awesome beast grabs the earthman and lifts him into the air, thrusting him straight toward its gaping jaws!

### 3. CAPTURED BY SHARK MEN!

Luckily, as the monster is about to devour Flash, Thun arrives and zaps the thing with his handy raygun. The two men race to save Dale, arriving at the



ceremonial chamber just before the final gong is struck. The mesmerized beauty is whisked away when her friends cause a giant idol of Tao to topple.

Fleeing through the tunnel, the fugitives come to a locked door which leads to the territory of the Shark-men. Thun destroys the obstacle, but he remains behind to hold off some pursuing guards. As Flash and Dale press on, they are being observed by Ming and Torch on a spacegraph. The tyrant causes the escapees to fall through another trap door, and they are abruptly seized by Shark-men (who, incidentally, don't look at all like sharks). The group enters a hydro-sub, which submerges and heads for an underwater city. When the vessel arrives at its destination, Dale is back to normal. She and Flash are taken before King Kala, who happens to be the pompous wrestling champion of his people. Flash goads him into a fight, which the earthman quickly wins. Kala sees to it that the victor is rewarded by being locked in a spacious room. As he and Dale watch, water rushes in and before long it appears that Flash may drown. However, an octosac (giant octopus) is sent in to keep the man company. The creature's long tentacles grab Flash and pull him underwater!

#### 4. BATTILING THE SEA BEAST!

Fortunately, Thun and Aura arrive and force Kala to save Flash. After the water has been drawn out of the room (weakening the octosac), Aura enters it to help her chosen one. She tells him that his friends have escaped and await him elsewhere, so they flee until they come upon the city's master control center. Flash overpowers a single guard while his evil companion rayguns the panel. This cuts off the power and air supplies, which dooms the metropolis.

Everyone in Shark City feels the effects of Aura's act of destruction. Dale faints from lack of oxygen, and her companions are gasping for breath. Suddenly, Flash arrives on the scene. As everyone now attempts to escape, the palace walls suddenly buckle and collapse. A torrent of water rushes in, headed straight toward the helpless group!



Tense moment from FLASH GORDON, Universal's 1936 serialization of Alex Raymond's then popular syndicated strip, finds Flash (Buster Crabbe) and Zerkov (Frank Shannon) confronting danger in TRAPPED IN THE TUNNEL. Episode the 12th in that pioneering serial.

#### 5. THE DESTROYING RAY!

Thankfully, Ming observes the predicament on his spacegraph. Before the heroes are inundated, he uses one of his super-scientific devices to nullify the magnetic force holding the city underwater. As a result, the entire metropolis quickly rises to the surface. Taking advantage of the confusion around them, Flash and his friends escape and head for the land of Thun's Lion-men.

At this time, a chubby, mustachioed individual named Prince Barin visits Zerkov. The newcomer claims that he is the true ruler of Mongo, but he was dethroned as a child when Ming killed his father. In return for Zerkov's aid in

overthrowing Ming, he offers to help the earthmen. The scientist agrees.

As Flash's party pushes on, a group of winged Hawk-men (sworn enemies of the Lion-men) attack. During the fight, Dale and Thun are carried off and flown to Sky City, which is suspended in mid-air by beams of light. There, a fat, bearded King Vultan has Thun sent to work on the atom furnaces, which burn radium and provide the power that keeps the city aloft. Of course, he has other plans for Dale.

At this time, Barin's rocket arrives with Zerkov and picks up Flash and Aura. They waste no time in taking off for Sky City to rescue the others. When their approaching rocket is sighted, Vultan orders it destroyed. While his troops prepare for battle, Vultan, who apparently wants to wed poor Dale, tries to "get next to" her. When she resists his amorous overtures, he siccs Urso, an enormous striped bear, on her. Although the animal does not harm her, she is nonetheless terrified. Vultan soon sends Urso away, hoping that Dale will be so grateful that she will accept him.

As Vultan concentrates on Dale, Barin's ship is crippled by a melting ray cannon. The craft, in flames, noses downward and falls!

#### 6. FLAMING TORTURE!

The rocket's plunge is stopped in mid-air, however, when the ship is caught in the anti-gravity rays that support Sky City. Before long, the occupants are brought before Vultan. Aura is treated as an unwilling guest and kept there so that her father will not attack the airborne metropolis. Flash and Barin are of course sent to toil in the furnace rooms. Zerkov, on the other hand, is ordered to develop a substitute for the dwindling radium supply. Without the necessary radioactive power, the elevated city would be doomed to destruction.

At the capital, Torch brings a wounded Hawk-man before the emperor. The hybrid informs Ming that Flash and the others have flown to Sky City. The tyrant then departs with his air fleet to personally teach Vultan a lesson. Meanwhile, Aura convinces Dale that Flash's life depends on her marrying their fat host. At an elaborate dinner, Dale



Rough and ready trio of lured Monkey-men attempt to make some of our hero in the very first episode of FLASH GORDON. Flash survives the encounter with all but his shirt intact, only to find himself cast into "the Pit," where several ravenous reptiles await him. (P.S. He survives that too).

#### 7. SHATTERING DOOM!

Dale faints, and is taken away, as Vultan orders Flash killed. As fate would have it, however, Aura picks that moment to arrive, and threatens the king with a raygun. The machine is shut off and a motionless Flash is carried to Zerkov's lab. The scientist uses a "reviver" on his finger to counteract the shocks. The treatment works, and the blond hero recovers. At this point, Aura is pretty fed up with Flash's rejection, and promises to blind him with a blowtorch if he does not change his attitude toward her. When Flash fails to waver, she gives up and runs off.

Flash is returned to the heavy labor battalion, and this time his wrist is wired to the atom furnace control board so that he will be electrocuted if he tries to escape again. Later on, Zerkov secretly fixes the high voltage wire to enable Flash to break contact by throwing his shovel into the furnace. Zerkov cautions that when he does this, everyone must be behind the large lead wall for their own protection.

Ming arrives at the city and demands the return of his daughter and the earthgirl. Vultan stubbornly refuses the bald man's demands, and even goes so far as to threaten Ming. As their armed forces are about to come to grips, Flash alerts the good guys in the furnace room. When all but the earthling are safely behind the lead wall, he throws his shovel into the furnace. A surprised guard immediately switches on the electric current. The resulting explosion seems to strike our unprotected hero just as he is in the process of leaping over the wall!

#### 8. TOURNAMENT OF DEATH!

Fortunately, Flash clears the wall just in time; he is safe when the explosion occurs. With the guards incapacitated, the heroes break loose, but Flash and Thun are again recaptured. Vultan mercilessly orders their execution. Barin, however, alerts Zerkov to Flash's current problem.

Just as the Hawk-men are about to shoot the two captives, the walls begin to shake (an airquake?). Everyone becomes fearful, and Zerkov comes running in with an explanation. It seems that the atom furnaces are damaged and no longer able to supply the power needed to keep the

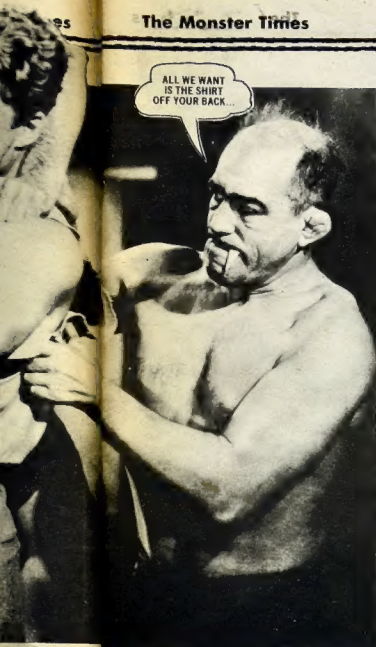
city hanging in space. In the face of death, Zerkov informs Vultan that he has discovered a new ray substitute that may save the city, but he will not use it unless his friends are freed. Vultan agrees to the demand, the ray works, and the strange city stops falling.

Aura (Priscilla Lawson), daughter of Ming and would-be lover of Flash, bails our indefatigable hero out of yet another tough situation, while Ming himself (Charles Middleton), power-mad Oriental from Outer Space, expresses his displeasure below.



WITH MY BRAIN AND HIS HAIR, WE COULD DARE TO RULE THE COSMOS!





the soldiers flee for their lives.

The monster shows up and sees the unconscious earthman. Zarkov and the others enter the tunnel just as the angry dragon advances toward Flash's inert figure!

#### 10. THE UNSEEN PERIL!

Luckily, Zarkov just happens to be carrying around a powerful grenade, which he throws at the towering beast. The resulting explosion eliminates the fiery horror, and Flash is rescued. The priest starts ranting and raving that they have killed the guardian of the sacred palace, then storms off. Zarkov perceives that Flash has been doped, but fears that he may not be able to find an antidote to the Lethan drug.

On the appointed day, Flash and his friends assemble in the throne room. Everyone knows that Flash has lost his memory, but Ming approves of the fact

However, a guard patrol, led by Torch, arrives to evacuate Flash.

The good guys are helpless. Torch states that either Flash submit to their order, or his companions die. Flash backs up against a large, mechanized metal panel as the guards take careful aim. As Torch gives the command to fire, Zarkov activates something and the living target seems to disintegrate!

#### 11. IN THE CLAWS OF THE TIGRON!

Happily, Flash has not been disintegrated but only rendered invisible by Zarkov. After the soldiers have fled in terror, the scientist admits that he does not know how long Flash will remain as he is. Flash does not care, for he only wants to remain invisible long enough to get his hands on Ming.

Word of the disappearing earthman spreads, and the populace moves about in terror. This is compounded when Flash

that he and Dale are being observed by Aura. In order to protect the blonde beauty, he takes her to the catacombs beneath Ming's palace. Aura learns of this, and sends the sacred tigron (similar to an earth tiger) to track the girl.

At the same time, Torch and his men surprise Flash (still invisible). Zarkov and Vultan in the lab. During the fight, the effects of Zarkov's ray wear off and Flash reappears. Barin enters the room, and he and Flash go to join Dale while "Doc" and the fat flying wonder stay behind to hold off the soldiers. The tigron reaches Dale first. Of a sudden, it leaps upon her, knocking her to the ground!

#### 12. TRAPPED IN THE TURRET!

Coincidentally enough, Flash arrives in the nick of time and attacks the striped animal with his bare hands. After a fierce struggle, he kills it. Once again, Dale is safe; oddly enough, she was not cut by the

episode of  
into "the  
ce of death.  
he has dis-  
he that may  
se it unless  
agrees to the  
the strange

While Vultan is willing to let the heroes go, Ming objects and orders a Tournament of Death. Whoever survives will gain his freedom and a bride of his choice. The ruler of the Hawk-men is angry that his word must be broken, but he has no say in the matter.

The affair is held in Sky City. Flash's first opponent is the Masked Swordsman of Mongo, whom he almost kills. The man turns out to be Barin, who only followed Ming's orders to fight Flash because he wants to marry Aura. He did not intend to kill his opponent. Flash pities Barin, and the two remain friends.

Flash's last opponent is not human. It is the unbeatable, man-sized orangapoid (horned ape), and the earthman is helpless against the immortal creature. After a short time, it forces his bruised and bleeding body to the floor and seems to kill him!

#### 9. FIGHTING THE FIRE DRAGON!

As the battle is going on, however, Aura approaches the High Priest and asks him how the monster may be killed. He blurts out that the only vulnerable area on the beast is a white spot at the throat. Without hesitation, she grabs a spear from an unwary guard and enters the arena. She whispers the secret to Flash, and together they slay the orangapoid. Ironically, Ming orders the High Priest to locate and kill the traitor who revealed the beast's weakness. Turning to the wounded earthman, Ming states that in three days, during a feast festival, Flash will receive his just desserts.

During the waiting period, Tunc returns to his own kingdom to prepare for another invasion. Back in Ming's capital, Zarkov is hard at work on his inter-stellar radio. So far, he has been unsuccessful in his attempts to contact earth.

Since Ming wants Flash dead, the High Priest pretends to aid Aura in drugging him. With the help of some soldiers, they carry him out of his private quarters.

As soon as they learn of this new treachery, Zarkov, Barin, Vultan and Dale pursue the kidnappers to the Tunnel of Terror, which is where the fire monster resides. When the villains stop to administer an amnesia drug to the unconscious captive, a guard arrives and warns them that Flash's allies are approaching. All but the priest hurriedly enter the tunnel of the fiery creature. The wily assassin then rings the gong to awaken the dragon, and



Flash wrestles opponent to the ground as Aura looks on, while Dale Arden (Jean Rogers) wanders into the path of one of two huge dinosaur-lizards who behave as though they haven't had a bite in three millennia.

that Aura claims the earthman chose her to be his bride. When Vultan objects, he is arrested and thrown into a dungeon. Flash, experiencing the effects of the "drops of forgetfulness," does not recognize his comrades, and believes Aura.

Later, when Barin intervenes, Aura convinces Flash that he is an enemy. The two duel, but Barin manages to knock out his opponent before either of them can be seriously harmed. Aura zips away as Flash is being carried to the laboratory. Zarkov then treats Flash with an "electro-reviver" to restore his memory. Of course, Mongolian technology and the bearded one's know-how succeed once again.

goes on a rampage, attacking soldiers whenever he has the chance. He even manages to enter Ming's throne and threaten the tyrant. For the first time, Ming truly fears earth's champion.

Flash frees Vultan from the dungeon prison, and the two fight their way back to Zarkov's lab. There, the genius has finally established contact with earth. Reception is weak, however, and communication is soon lost. As Ming plots to destroy the wondrous invisibility machine, the heroes prepare a rocket to fly them to Sky City. If they can reach the floating metropolis, they will be able to safely plot Ming's downfall.

While in the laboratory, Barin discovers

beast's sharp claws. Following this, Zarkov and Vultan are overpowered by their foes. After seeing to it that the invisibility machine is destroyed, Torch and his men take the prisoners away.

Aura, repentant after having a heart-to-heart talk with Barin, goes to her evil father on behalf of the heroes. She and the others are surrounded as soon as they enter the room, but Barin blurts out that he loves Aura. When Ming sees that his daughter may feel the same way about him, the tyrant orders a cessation to all hostilities. He gives the earthlings their freedom and then commands them to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28



Over a decade ago, an obscure comics company called Tower began issuing T.H.U.N.D.E.R. AGENTS, a superior superhero series with a heavy accent on science fiction. In the employ of the United Nations, the agents of T.H.U.N.D.E.R. could be counted on to storm into action whenever friendly folk found themselves imperilled by the multifarious forces of evil ever at work in the universe. TMT comics scholar Howard Phillips takes time out to reminisce about that extinct but unforgettable sci-fi series here...

The main question this issue is: Who exactly were the T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Agents? They were created in 1965 by an obscure company known as Tower Comics, Inc., and their original stories only lasted until 1968. The Higher United Nations Defense Enforcement Reserves were a very special, top-secret U.N. army. Their purpose was to keep the world safe from groups like the Warlords (just in case you're wondering, they weren't a teenage gang or a rock group), S.P.I.D.E.R., and the Red Star. They did surprisingly well against all of their adversaries, and on the whole the action-packed tales were very good (during the first two years, that is, after which the "comedy element" and hackneyed plots started creeping in more and more). The artwork was often exceptional, thanks to the considerable skills of Wally Wood, Gil Kane, Steve Ditko, and Al Williamson (which is why copies of these scarce mags are pretty expensive nowadays). All of the issues were giant 25¢ ones, and they were certainly worth it!



**DYNAMO**  
 SPECIAL: LAUNCHER BOLT POWER  
 NAME: Brown, Leonard  
 DESCRIPTION: HAIR: Brown EYES: Blue HEIGHT: 6'11"  
 WEIGHT: 200 (normal) 1000 (with belt activated)  
 SPECIALTY: the Thunderbolt  
 REMARKS: belt increases mass and density of molecules, nearly impenetrable, increasing strength a hundredfold and nearly indestructible.

BY HOWARD PHILLIPS

Menthor's talents were all in his highly-coveted helmet, a handy piece of hardware that not only prompted the wearer's I.Q. to increase dramatically, but also released latent powers of Telekinesis, Teleportation, ESP, and etc.



## MENTHOR

OFFICIAL THUNDER SECRET FILE DOSSIER

NAME: Janus, John J. AGE: 28  
 DESCRIPTION: HAIR: Blonde EYES: Blue HEIGHT: 5' 11"  
 WEIGHT: 165

SPECIALTY: Cybernetic Helmet,

REMARKS: The helmet amplifies the brain power of wearer, releasing latent potential for ESP, Telekinesis, Teleportation, etc...

## ROLLING INTO ACTION

In T.H.U.N.D.E.R. #1, three super-agents were introduced: Dynamo, NoMan, and Menthor. The T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Squad also made its debut, but its five rough-and-ready members lacked any really extraordinary abilities. Later on, a few more super-heroes were added, but the seemingly endless array of dastardly villains always kept the good guys on the go. The heroes were never original, but certain intriguing aspects of their origins and powers were.

Dynamo was the main agent, and he starred in more tales than anybody else. He had a Thunderbelt (or more precisely, an electron molecular intensifier) that changed his body's atomic structure. This made him nearly invulnerable, incredibly strong, and able to leap great distances at a single bound (sound familiar?). Unfortunately, it also placed a great drain upon his energy, and he could not safely use his powers for more than half an hour at a time. This enabled the villains to capture him on his very first mission, but his friends soon came to the rescue and saved the day.

NoMan was an interesting chap, in that "he" was really a group of identical androids. The brain of a brilliant, deceased scientist was able to transfer from one synthetic body to another, and his uniform included an invisibility cloak (made of lightweight, non-reflecting polarizer material, naturally). The expendable bodies were often destroyed, but the brain always managed to switch to another one just in time.

Menthor started out as an enemy spy, but his cybernetic helmet amplified and altered his

## T.H.U.N.D.E.R. SQUAD

 <b>GUY (GILBERT)</b> LEADER OF SQUAD SPECIAL FORCES NAZAR WEDAL OF SMOKE WINNER SPECIALIST IN MILITARY TACTICS AND STRATEGY	 <b>DYNAMITE (JOHN)</b> WEAPONS EXPERT FORMER UNDERCOVER OFFICE BOMB JUDO AND KARATE EXPERT AND KARATE OR CONCEALED SHOT SENSITIVE NATURE
 <b>KITTEN (KATHRYN)</b> TECHNICAL EXPERT AN INVENTOR AND SCIENTIST IN HER OWN RIGHT, FORMER SCIENCE TEACHER AT INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY BECAUSE OF VARIOUS L.A. PEACE COMMISSIONERS	 <b>WEED (WILLIAM)</b> EXPERT LOCKSMITH AND ESCAPE ARTIST AFTER A BOWWOWN SHADY PAST, WAS RE- FORMED BY CHANCE TO DO USEFUL AND CONSTRUCTIVE WORK AS A MEMBER OF THE T.H.U.N.D.E.R. TEAM

The T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Squad included a crew of non-superpowered but nonetheless talented agents who aided and abetted their more unusual superiors in their battle against such subversive organizations as the Council of Warlords and the Secret People's International Directorate for Extra-Legal Revenue.

brain to turn him into a good guy. Later on, it gave him full-time super-powers. One of his best was the ability to absorb the brain power of opponents, and then use their strength in addition to his own. All in all, the T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Agents were really an impressive bunch.

In the premiere issue, the first evil Warlord was introduced. He was supposedly a criminal mastermind who, as usual, wanted to take over the world. His combat resources were incredible, ranging from mentally-controlled "zombies" and super-robots to gigantic monsters. It wasn't until two books later that we learned about the green-skinned subterranean race and their Council of Warlords. In issue #6, in a story called "Final Encounter," most of these green meemies were wiped out.

Weird things were always happening to the T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Agents. In the second issue of their mag, a NoMan android was

accidentally taken over by one of the Warlords. The villain posed as our hero for awhile, but in the end our side naturally won it out. It was in this same issue that Menthor officially became a good guy, and his tabanan employer wasn't at all pleased when he quit the evil ones. As a result, the special agent was nearly killed. In the last story, the T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Squad was confronted by mutated fish, "Egg-head," one of the members sacrificed his life in order to save his companions. (Since Tower didn't play up his death, neither will I.)

NoMan was almost killed off in the succeeding issue, when he ran out of artificial bodies to transfer to, an occupational hazard that, in this case, nearly proved fatal. In this book, too, Menthor was captured, and his treacherous brother was substituted for him. Of course, the last Menthor was exposed before he could do any serious damage to



T.H.U.N.D.E.R. headquarters (hooray for our side).

### LIGHTNING JOINS T.H.U.N.D.E.R.

Lightning was introduced in issue #4. He was formerly Gaby Gilbert, leader of the T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Squad. Thanks to a speed-inducer in his special costume, he became one of the many Flash rip-offs (i.e., he had super speed). Interestingly enough, this swift power also shortened his life because of the abnormal expenditure of energy involved. The last tale in the book, incidentally, revealed that, because of constant use of his cybernetic helmet, Mentor retained his powers permanently. He found that he normally (?) had ESP, telepathy, hypnosis, telekinesis, and a few other arcane abilities even when he didn't wear the helmet. By the way, his opponent this time around was a man who was wearing the gifted headpiece. Figure!

NoMan fell in love in issue #7, but his unexpected marriage proposal was refused. Furthermore, the hidden city of the Subterraneans was located and destroyed by Dynamo in another tale. The concluding story ended with Mentor giving his life to save his fellow agents. This was the most tragic T.H.U.N.D.E.R. tale of all, and it was reprinted in a later issue. It ended at the cemetery, during a heavy rain-fall (you know, the heavens crying for a fallen hero, and the like), for one, missed Mentor.

In 1966, Dynamo was awarded his own comic (to dumb!). The first issue showed him and NoMan going to the moon to track down some UFOs. They were given a hot reception by some otherworldly creatures, but Dynamo succeeded in destroying the alien base. Later on, Red Star (Chinese Communist) secret agents clashed with some surviving Subterraneans and, of course, T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Last but not least, Andor was introduced. This handsome chap was a human who had been raised by the green devils since infancy. During the next 20 years, he had been specially trained to become a super-powered killer for the Subterraneans. His strength, speed, agility, recuperative powers, and mental abilities far surpassed those of mortal men. While on his mission, his humanity overflowed and he turned on his inhuman "parents" (unlike, if you ask me).

In order to destroy some of the Subterraneans, NoMan posed as their leader, the Overlord, in T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Agents #8. The Raven, another reformed villain, made his debut in this book. He was given a special suit, complete with jet packs, that enabled him to fly. His personal abilities included hyper-acute hearing and vision.

The Secret People's International Directorate for Extra-Legal Revenue came along in the next issue. This world-wide gang of subversives was really on the ball, and they often gave our heroes a tough time. Andor returned in another tale, controlled by a surviving Warlord. Lightning confronted him, but when Andor regained his mental freedom and turned against the villains, the T.H.U.N.D.E.R. agent understood and allowed him to go free. Raven turned up wearing a new outfit in this same issue.

In issue #10, Andor was back once more. He again became the pawn of the same Warlord, and in the end he seemed to die in a plane crash. Kitten, the only female T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Squad member, was hypnotized by Red Star agents in a follow-up tale. During the same month, NoMan got his own comic. Among other things, he fought against a pair of

**NOMAN**  
 OFFICIAL THUNDER SECRET FILE DORMER  
 NAME: Dunn, Anthony G. AGE: 76  
 DESCRIPTION: HAIR: none EYES: HEIGHT: 6'  
 WEIGHT: 350 (Android body average weight)  
 SPECIALTY: Invisibility Cloak, Ability to switch from one body to another.  
 REMARKS: Dr. Dunn, top T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Agent scientist volunteered to let his human body die to transfer consciousness to identical android brain.

Talk about your split personalities—T.H.U.N.D.E.R.'s NoMan changed bodies faster than most of us mortal types change clothes. Though the entire T.H.U.N.D.E.R. crew endured themselves to large legions of sci-fi comics buffs, the series abruptly folded in 1968. Its memory, however, will surely remain.

invaders from another solar system, and went on a journey into the past. In the concluding tale, he was helped by a good Subterranean.

March was a really busy month: T.H.U.N.D.E.R. AGENTS #11, DYNAMO #3, and NOMAN #2 were all released. Deadly robots, controlled by the aliens from the mysterious moon base, took over T.H.U.N.D.E.R. headquarters in DYNAMO #3. In his own comic, NoMan fought a living female mummy that had its own "kiss of death." In addition, he foiled an attempt to bring none other than Adolf Hitler back from the dead.

NoMan switched brains with a living man in T.H.U.N.D.E.R. AGENTS #13, but all was set straight by the time the finale rolled around. Later on, a cheap churl found Mentor's previously missing cybernetic helmet and proceeded to put it to decidedly bad use. In the end, the headpiece was again lost. The last tale was a plug for T.H.U.N.D.E.R. AGENTS, a companion magazine of inferior quality (they only had two supermen).

Dynamo was voluntarily teleported to the planet of the moon base aliens in the fourth issue of his own mag. When he nearly wrecked their civilization, they decided to leave earth alone in the future.

A bearded Andor went blind in T.H.U.N.D.E.R. AGENTS #14, and Dynamo was powerless to stop him from escaping one more time. Due to overuse of his speed-inducer, Lightning had to be put in suspended animation in this issue. Also, NoMan fell under S.P.I.D.E.R.'s mental influence and nearly died again.

The next issue began with Andor's reappearance, and in the end he was unknowingly reunited with the last remaining Warlord. Lightning was cured in

a succeeding tale, while NoMan's brain ended up on a distant planet for awhile. After defeating the aliens who had plotted to attack earth, he managed to send his mind back to where it belonged. It remained on our world for the remainder of the series.

Andor's vision partially returned in the 16th issue, but he remained an anti-hero. This was his final appearance in the series. NoMan assumed a human identity with the help of some special makeup, but that didn't last long. Finally, Dynamo developed combat fatigue! The sure stroke for reality at Tower!

**T.H.U.N.D.E.R. GOES UNDER**  
 In T.H.U.N.D.E.R. AGENTS #17, the cybernetic helmet turned up in the hands of S.P.I.D.E.R. for a time, but then it was lost again at story's end. Dynamo seemed to go back in time in the following book, but nothing was made certain. This and the next issue contained one reprint each, and the last magazine in the series (\$20) was an all-reprint issue (sorta like a lot of Marvel's current titles). Both DYNAMO and NOMAN had ceased publication months earlier. The end had finally come.

Optimistically speaking, the T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Agents still exist, but their exploits are too important to be revealed to the public. Pessimistically speaking, they never really existed, and we'll never see them again (except for an occasional fanzine appearance, perhaps). That's really unfortunate, because they were a really good group. They were the first team to combine superheroes with the spy craze of the 1960s, and they did it pretty well. For a while there, things really honed in the pages of the T.H.U.N.D.E.R. AGENTS. Thanks, Tower Comics, Inc. We won't forget you.

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**1975**







# The Scene

In keeping with the current revival of things macabre, all the eerie ephemera that's been appearing lately in places where madmen normally fear to tread will be duly reported in this irregular column. THE MONSTER SCENE is brought to you by your friendly friends-in-the-field at TMT. (...listen for the sound of applause.)

## THE KING AND OUI

For some strange reason, King Kong has become a celeb of some standing in many of the nation's leading slicks. Not only did Bury St. Edmund's THE FILMS OF KING KONG humor piece appear in the January 78 edition of OUI Magazine, but a recent issue of GALLERY offered a similar simian satire entitled QUEEN KONG. No doubt the much-heralded planned remakes of the 1933 fright film classic are providing some of the inspiration for all this apish activity, but we must admit that this sudden rash of Kong Komedies leaves us more than a little bit baffled. I mean, what's supposed to be so godawful funny about a fifty-foot ape in unrequited love with a human lady a tenth his size in the first place, is what we'd like to know. Surely stranger things than THAT are happening even as you read this.



THE ART AND THE AGONY OF THE TINSELTOWN TIT

**"IT CAME FROM THE ORSON WELLES"**

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## BOSTON MARATHON

For Bay area sci-fi fans, the series event was little less than a dream come true. Boston's Orson Welles Cinema, in conjunction with THE BOSTON PHOENIX (a local weekly), presented a "24-Hour Marathon of Star-Spangled, Monster-Studded, Science-Fiction Classics." The monstrous marathon ran from 12 noon February 15th to 12 noon the following day and featured no fewer than 14 sci-fi features, including THE THING, WAR OF THE WORLDS, INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS and, as an extra added attraction, the ever-popular STAR TREK Bloopers. The entire marathon cost only \$4.75 per ticket (plus a free brunch) which, as this PHOENIX ad points out, comes to a more than reasonable 34¢ per film. Let's hope other theaters around the country get the word and stage similar sci-fi marathons of their own.

## SCI-FI TAKES CUE

As this colorful cover from the December 26, 1975 edition of CUE Magazine amply demonstrates, battle lines are being drawn between hardcore Trekkies and dedicated followers of the ITC's outer space usurper, SPACE: 1999. To be sure, the shows' audiences overlap to some extent, but, according to CUE's inside article (by Mike Jahn, the very same reporter who covered TMT for GALLERY Magazine a while back), there has also been a great deal of heated debate over the merits and/or demerits of the respective shows. Much has

been written on the newer series' dearth of winning characters and overemphasis on special effects, to say nothing of the flagrant scientific flaws that have aroused the critical ire of the likes of Isaac Asimov. Supporters of the series, on the other hand, contend that Trekkies are lost in time, expending their considerable fan energy on a show that no longer exists... except as a huge industry and state of mind. For our writers' views on this vital sci-fi subject, check elsewhere in this issue. Meanwhile, debate goes on.



## CURSE OF THE CANDIDATES

For some scurrilous reason, political cartoonists have been going out of their way of late to employ monster metaphors when deriding various public figures. The latest case in point to catch our collective eye is this Sorel cartoon appearing in the

January 19, 1976 issue of TIME. Though Hubert Humphrey may indeed be a Man of a Thousand Political Faces, none of them pretty, we do wish cartoonists would stop maligning the good name of Monsterdom this way.

Are you afraid of Strathmore?



## PAPER SIMIAN

This ad for Strathmore paper products also makes generous use of the Kong legend. The copy tie-in has it that even as intimidated citizens feared Kong, so do some designers and printers fear Strathmore's allegedly high paper prices. But said designers and printers are in error, the copy points out, because while it's true their product "looks like hand-made, imported paper," it "doesn't cost like one." Thanks go to the TMT Just In Case You Were Wondering Dept. for bringing this item to our attention.

## EERIE AWARDS

The Los Angeles-based Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror Films (a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation of some 200 experts in the science fiction, fantasy, and horror film genres) presented its 3rd Annual Golden Scroll Awards For 1975 this January 31st past. We thought that the Academy's selections would be of interest to TMT readers, and so here are the winners in the major creature categories. The envelopes, please:

Best Science Fiction Film 1975: ROLLERBALL

Best Fantasy Film 1975: DOC SAVAGE

Best Horror Film 1975: YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN

Special Award 1975: JAWS

Best Actor: JAMES CAAN (ROLLERBALL) and DON JOHNSON (A BOY AND HIS DOG)

Best Actress: KATHERINE ROSS (THE STEPFORD WIVES)

Best Supporting Actor: MARTY FELDMAN (YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN)

Best Supporting Actress: IDA LUPINO (THE DEVIL'S RAIN)



Best Direction: MEL BROOKS (YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN)

Best Writing: IB J. MELCHOIR and HARLAN ELLISON

Special Life Career Award: FRITZ LANG

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...the most popular...

## SUPER SOCKS

A recent edition of the NEW YORK SUNDAY TIMES carried this pitch for Camp's new line of Super Hero Socks. The "All-Star Athletic Tube Socks" feature color prints of, among other superheroes, Superman, Batman, Robin and Shazam. Remember, you saw it second in THE MONSTER TIMES.



Hubert Humphrey

**"THE CANDIDATE WHO WOULDN'T DIE"**



## WATCH OUT STAR TREK: HERE COMES

While the popularity of the late, lamented **STAR TREK** teleseries continues to expand, loyal Trekkies have recently been faced with a formidable challenger to the TV sci-fi throne, ITC's **SPACE: 1999**. You may recall that back in TMT #41 we ran a brief preview of the series; since then, **SPACE: 1999**, without the benefit of any network support, has inspired a cult following of its own. To present a fuller picture of the **SPACE: 1999** saga, we sent R. Allen Leider to report on the show's progress and talk with stars Martin Landau and Barbara Bain. His fascinating findings follow forthwith...

In 1999, the moon is blasted out of earth's orbit. On it are some 300 men and women from all nations of earth, originally based there to man an early warning defense system and to repel possible invaders. The catastrophe is caused by a series of spectacular thermonuclear explosions that tear away portions of the moon and completely alter its gravitational relationship with earth.

With Moonbase Alpha intact, the moon careens inexorably away from earth. It can never return, and becomes the only world for its inhabitants, whose goal now is to find a compatible planet on which to settle.

Self-sustaining, the base is able to maintain survival conditions. Food, air and water recycling installations are powered by atomic and solar energy. All systems necessary for the life functions of the people, and the computer-governed operations of the complex machinery, are operative—making the runaway moon totally self-supporting.

Thus the fateful journey through the incredible vastness of space begins. In the course of their adventures, the explorers match wits and weapons with the fantastic life forms found throughout the galaxies, and with the awesome forces of the universe itself.

In tireless pursuit of all the latest news of Star Trek mentor Gene Roddenberry's equally tireless attempts to bring a gala **STAR TREK** movie to the silver screen, we dispatched TMT correspondent R. Allen Leider to California to query Gene about the ongoing **STAR TREK** story. His hot-off-the-wire report begins herewith...

## TREKKIN' TOWARD THE LIGHT GENE RODDENBERRY

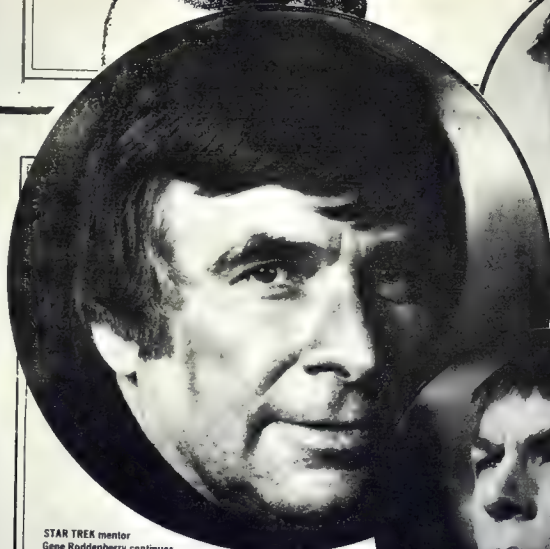
If things had gone smoothly, the new **STAR TREK** feature would be in full-swing production right now. But they haven't, and it isn't. In fact, the third draft of the proposed screenplay is just now being mulled over by Bob Evans at Paramount and won't be judged for some time yet. Just what is happening with that grandiose project, designed not only to get **STAR TREK** on theater screens but to restore the TV series as well, is better told by the creator of the project and series both—Gene Roddenberry.

**TMT:** What, exactly, is the current status of the **STAR TREK** movie?

# SPACE: 1999

**SPACE: 1999** stars Martin Landau and Barbara Bain are hoping that the British teleseries has a long and fruitful future ahead of it, though many **STAR TREK** supporters take a less generous view of the show

BY R. ALLEN LEIDER



**STAR TREK** mentor Gene Roddenberry continues his campaign to get his proposed **STAR TREK** movie in the can



while former series stars William Shatner and Leonard Nimoy await further word on the project's progress



**Roddenberry:** The status of the **STAR TREK** motion picture feature—as of January 14, 1976—seems to be that we are at last close to a contract with Paramount. My representatives and Paramount have agreed on most of my points—



## EXPERT EFFECTS

The special effects offer a major challenge for the creators of the **SPACE: 1999** series. They provide some of the most vivid, exciting and imaginative aspects of the production, and credit must go to two men, Brian Johnson, designer and director of the special effects department, and special effects director Nick Alder.

Brian Johnson is one of the film world's most experienced and knowledgeable special effects men. He has worked on the fantastic effects in **TASTE THE BLOOD OF DRACULA**, **WHEN DINOSAURS RULED THE EARTH**, and the Stanley Kubrick blockbuster **2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY**. His work for **SPACE: 1999** is confined to a specially built complex at Pinewood Studios in London.

"My first challenge was to design a feasible Alpha Moonbase. That is, feasible both on the scientific front and the practical front...studio space. I designed a modular Alpha," states Johnson, "and linked the sections together with a sort of subway system. It's a combination elevator and pneumatic tube. The scenery sections of the Alpha Moonbase are housed at the Pinewood soundstages. There are about 18 of them in all and they are interchangeable for greater flexibility. One wall with certain details can be used in many sets with minimal restyling."

The next problem was the actual space travel sequences. For these Brian Johnson created the Eagle spacecraft.

"The Eagle was another of my modular ideas. The central cabin is interchangeable and can be switched with passenger, freight or other modules. It's a bit insect-like in appearance. It developed that way as I doodled it together. They (the Eagles) take off vertically and then move forward with rear rockets functioning. Some are laser-equipped for battle, others are just for transport."

The special optical effects are shot at another studio with rear and front projection screens and special high-pattern optical devices. The models are tested many times before the actual footage is shot. The effects footage is then optically married to the other footage and the results are nothing less than spectacular.

"There is a great emphasis on technology," *Space* star Martin Landau affirms. "One of the pieces of hardware that we're most dependent on is the master compu-



As has been noted, great attention is paid to the technical aspects of **SPACE: 1999**. A team of make-up artists labored long and hard to transform Barbara Bain into this convincing cavewoman on view here for **THE FULL CIRCLE** episode of that series, in which Moonbase Alpha becomes trapped in a time warp

ter on Moonbase Alpha. We have a sort of love-hate relationship with it. The technician-scientist who runs it adores it... it's almost a romance. To him, the computer can do no wrong. As commander of the base, I have to depend more on human emotional factors for making decisions. When that computer makes a mistake—or I think it does—I want to kick it the way you kick your car when it dies on the freeway at rush hour."

## SCIENCE FRICTION

Of course, the show has raised some eyebrows in scientific circles. The technical data and premises from which the show operates have come under fire from more than one quarter. Shortly after

the prestigious *Science Digest* printed an article expressing the view that the show was at once fantastic enough to intrigue the imagination and real enough to be scary, letters came pouring in from experts and amateurs alike offering all sorts of criticisms of the show's premises.

One of the most oft-attacked aspects of the show is the premise that the kind of explosion described in the first episode could indeed have blasted the moon out of orbit in the direction and at the speed the series tells us it did. Critics were quick to point out such scientific errors:

"If the explosion were to occur on the dark side of the moon, as the 1999 program has it, then the moon would be sent hurtling into the earth, not away

from it."

And:  
"Even in 24 years, the accumulation of atomic waste would never amount to the quantity needed for an explosion of the magnitude of that blast shown in the **SPACE: 1999** show."

Most of the scientific scholars, even though their precise criticisms differed greatly, were of the opinion that the amount of energy needed to blast the moon out of orbit was impossible to create under the circumstances shown in the program. In fact, one astute individual stated that the sun's total output of energy would be needed for over 40 hours to perform the feat. Even renowned science and sci-fi writer-editor Dr. Isaac Asimov agreed with most of the show's critics.

In fact, Dr. Asimov published some interesting observations on the subject. Among other criticisms, he questioned why the Alpha Moonbase is always lit the same, from the same direction and always very brightly, despite the constantly changing light sources (stars) around it. Asimov concluded that **STAR TREK** was by far the more accurate of the two shows, as it had the foresight to hire scientific advisors to prevent misinformation from polluting the minds of impressionable viewers.

The simple fact is that when you deal in reality to the extent that events depicted in a sci-fi format represent what supposedly could happen tomorrow, you are trapped by the limits of present-day technology. In **STAR TREK**, creator Gene Roddenberry had the advantage of being able to assume great leaps forward in technology and was thus allowed to utilize such otherwise fanciful devices as warp drive, phaser weaponry and the like without being subjected to vitriolic rebuttals. Still, conflicts over science fiction vs. science fact notwithstanding, **SPACE's** popularity continues to grow at a phenomenal rate.

## NETWORKS NIX SPACE SERIES

Most of the headaches began after the initial episodes of **SPACE: 1999** had been completed. **SPACE** creators **ITC** figured that the major American networks would take the fight tooth and nail to secure the rights to the series. Instead, network brass ho-hummed the idea. Why? Like its predecessor, **STAR TREK**, **SPACE: 1999** had

creative control and things like that. I understand that Paramount, after investing millions of dollars in this venture, has to have controls of its own, but I have the same control I had over the show. That's all I really wanted.

**TMT:** Are they keeping the idea of ten superstar cameo roles for their contracted people?

**Roddenberry:** Yes, the cameos are in. They are still thinking in terms of a very comfortable budget, and that I should think of writing in terms of the best possible **STAR TREK** film rather than writing for money-oriented ideas.

**TMT:** Are they keeping the idea of using the Magicam process for the inclusion of miniature sets?

**Roddenberry:** Maybe. Some things work, others don't. It still needs refining, especially if you want to zoom in or out, or use multiple cameras. Until we settle on the script it will be hard to judge if Magicam will be the best way, or most economical way, of handling things.

**TMT:** Has it been used before?

**Roddenberry:** I've heard stories from directors who have used it for commercials and special projects who say "It was wonderful," and stories that "I wish I had used the old-fashioned way." So who knows? When we get into script and have a director and a cameraman we may find a scene that, with a little re-working in an interesting way, will adapt very well for Magicam. It will save money too, when



you consider building an alien landscape or city over twenty square feet under controlled conditions instead of using a whole soundstage. Of course, the parts of the **USS Enterprise** that are used regularly and in key dramatic scenes, like the bridge, will be full size.

**TMT:** Are you still planning to redesign the bridge with new materials?

**Roddenberry:** Yes. When we first designed it we had a limited budget, and since, of course, new materials have been created...digital readouts, new controls

and new plastics. The rail on the old bridge was simply 2x4 lumber sanded and painted. In the new set we'll have a molded railing.

**TMT:** Will the outside of the ship undergo alteration?

**Roddenberry:** No. It will remain the same. It's something too sacred at this stage to be tampered with.

**TMT:** Have you seen **SPACE: 1999**? What do you think of it?

**Roddenberry:** I agree with most of the criticisms that Isaac Asimov has ex-



pressed. However, from a producer's point of view, the success of any science-fiction series on American television is a blow for all of us. Everything that opens eyes at the programming offices and advertisers' desks helps us get back on the air.

**TMT:** Do you like the term science fiction or do you prefer some other, nontyped title—like science drama or futuristic drama?

**Roddenberry:** No, science fiction is fine with me. I often use the term *imaginative drama* too. It depends what the project is. Imaginative drama includes fantasy, and science fiction should be realistic or scientifically plausible, which fantasy often isn't.

**TMT:** What is the greatest fault of science-fiction producers?

**Roddenberry:** Well, as I was about to say, **SPACE: 1999** makes this mistake and so have many of the best science-fiction writers and producers: They put all or too much emphasis on the effects. The special effects men are really most of the film's substance. The effects really have the starring roles over the three-dimensional human beings, whose roles are diminished to supporting the effects. You cannot treat science fiction as something outside the normal field of drama. It is drama, just under different, futuristic circumstances. It responds to the rules of drama like any other form of dramatic endeavor. So often the characters in





SPACE: 1999's elaborate and costly special effects have been attacked by not one but two groups of detractors. Some, like STAR TREK's Gene Roddenberry, feel that the show's emphasis on special effects subtracts from its dramatic value; others like Dr. Isaac Asimov, hold that many of the series' scientific premises are shaky at best.



SPACE: 1999 and other shows come off as two-dimensional entities, not because the actors aren't good—many are excellent but because the script isn't featuring them, but the optics.

**TMT:** The new shows will develop the characters more, we hear.

**Roddenberry:** Yes, the second season, I hope so.

**TMT:** What about your other projects?

**Roddenberry:** Well, GENESIS II has gone its route for the time being. CBS didn't buy it. ABC made its own pilot and then the movie for TV with the same cast but not with my name. It was too far gone at that stage.

**TMT:** What about QUESTOR?

**Roddenberry:** It's still shelved at NBC. They didn't want to pursue it without major changes. They said some nonsense like it was too much like THE SIX MILLION DOLLAR MAN and they wanted to write out some of the key people. It is always a hassle. It's owned right now by NBC, Universal and a small portion of it by me. It is conceivable that Universal may buy out NBC and bring it elsewhere. Who knows?

**TMT:** One of the things that has always bothered me is the casting. I thought for a long time that many of the shows, GENESIS II and QUESTOR in fact, would have gone series if the casting was better.



While Bill Shatner has his hands full with Trouble troubles, Gene Roddenberry faces even weightier problems in his ongoing attempts to bring STAR TREK to the screen and, hopefully, back on the tube. You can count on TMT's keeping careful track of this still-developing story and relaying all updated reports to you.

**Roddenberry:** That's a problem. When GENESIS II was introduced, I wanted Lloyd Bridges for the lead. The TV people went to their statistics file. The TV-Q list used by the advertisers to tell them who sells what and how they will sell it—and told me that Lloyd Bridges in a TV sci-fi

was not what the advertiser thought would sell the toothpaste. In fact, all 12 of my choices were dumped out the same way. They chose a very capable actor, Alex Cord—but not for this series, as it turned out. As for QUESTOR, I wanted and wrote it for Leonard Nimoy.

**"As we all could have predicted,"** Landau remarks, "when the series was sold to individual stations across the country, it sold like hotcakes. The ratings showed it to be miles ahead of anything else in that time slot, including all network programs."

In fact, the show has been so successful running exclusively on independent stations (over 150 at last count) that ITC is preparing a second season of 24 more episodes for the series. Presumably they based their decision on the fact that SPACE is wiping out all competition in two major markets, New York and Chicago. Just what the network execs in New York are doing about it is not known.

It is known that producing and distributing the show cost International Television Corporation over \$6½ million—the most expensive TV series ever created. They spared nothing to make sure the series was the finest money could buy.

"One thing that impresses me," comments Landau, "is the use of exterior and interior sets. In most series, many of the sets are used over and over again. For 1999, they built each exterior and alien planet set from scratch so it would be a new and different place each time, not a gathering of rearranged fiberglass rocks and such. The interiors too were often changed and only main areas of activity appear frequently, for continuity."

The series is produced by what previously produced such successful series as MY PARTNER THE GHOST, THE SAINT, THE PROTECTORS, DEPARTMENT S and the not-so-successful U.F.O. And ITC is very happy with its new gold-mine. After U.F.O. bombed, they went looking for ways to use the sets and crews in a new sci-fi project, and SPACE: 1999 was the result of that search. Both series utilize the same well-designed futuristic moonbase, laser guns and high-fashion uniforms. Only for SPACE: 1999, more than a few bucks went to Rudi Gernreich for the designs, which may become commercially available should the series catch

on to the extent that STAR TREK has.

Unlike STAR TREK, SPACE makes no pretense of being philosophy disguised as science fiction. SPACE: 1999 is pure futuristic gadgetry, fantasy, and adventure, with an occasional monster or two tossed in for good measure. It also sports some very talented guest stars, like Christopher Lee, Peter Cushing and Richard Johnson, to cite a few of the better-known.

#### SPACE VS. STAR

"One of the best things about SPACE:

1999 that STAR TREK didn't have is a sense of immediacy," Martin Landau opines. "Our series is just 25 years or so away. STAR TREK was hundreds of years in the future...very hard to comprehend in a real sense...and very idealistic, which is fine for what it is. But I like relevancy better. The man I play might be one of the kids watching. He grew up in the fifties and knows everything they know. He may even have watched STAR TREK, but he's more real to the viewer. He's very vulnerable too. The problem with the STAR TREK attitude is that they could afford to be nice to everyone they met; they had this gigantic ship and enough fire power to destroy whole planets. We don't. We are a small force at the mercy of the elements and all we encounter. A very real situation that people really connect with."

Like many actors who became successful in films and TV, Martin Landau didn't begin his career with any theatrical ambitions at all. Like Robert Redford and Gene Hackman, he began as a graphic artist.

"I was always talented with paints and things," he relates. "It led me to study art at New York's Pratt Institute, the same place that Robert Redford studied. From there I went to the Art Students League and finally got my first real job as staff artist in the New York Daily News art department."

It didn't take long, however, for the acting bug to bite.

"I had always been interested in it (acting), but not as a career. My first real acting experience was in summer stock. I was so bad that I decided to attend acting classes full time."

It was in one of his classes that he first met a pert and pretty model named Barbara Bain.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 27

Universal said no. The same thing happened.

**TMT:** It seems that the networks are getting their hands into the pot more than before.

**Roddenberry:** Yes. They are all over the place. In PLANET EARTH, the second GENESIS II attempt, the casting was just a horror. They turned down 14 names I suggested. They were so far into the production date they didn't even run screen tests on my people.

**TMT:** With the movie project in full throttle, do you have time for any other projects?

**Roddenberry:** All writers have other projects in the fire. I just have to find time with most of my energy right now going into the final scripting of the STAR TREK movie. Also, it helps if you get stuck on one project to switch to another for relaxation.

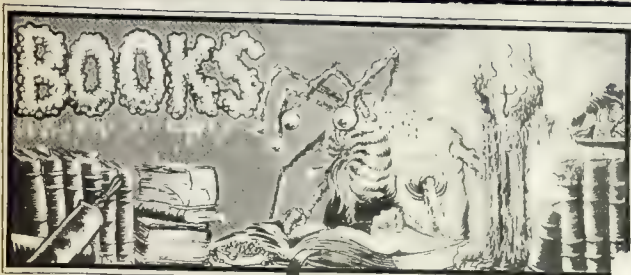
**TMT:** When do you think we'll have some good news, like an accepted script and a casting call?

**Roddenberry:** Next spring, I hope.

**TMT:** We'll be listening for the announcement. Are you doing any more lecture tours or conventions?

**Roddenberry:** Yes. I'll do one of the STARCONs back east next month and a few more lectures I'll make them quick, though. There's a lot to do here. I think we can see the light at the end of the tunnel...well, you know what I mean.





**T**he visuals here are taken from a 175-page paperback called 2000 A.D.: Illustrations from The Golden Age of Science-Fiction Pulp, by Jacques Sadoul of France. The Henry Regnery Co. of Chicago sells it for \$7.95 a shot, and it has fewer than ten color pages. As a gift for a friend, supposing you like somebody enough to spend \$8 on them, it might be quite a prop, but God forbid you should buy it for yourself. This is a pretty book, though none too prettily arranged or reproduced: It is one of those books that might be nice to have around, as long as it came for free. In short, a birthday book. Look no further than 2000 A.D., when making your next gift-book selection, kids!

But oh yes, there is another use for this book, or "function," if you will. The first thing one notices from thumbing through it is the more-than-generous abundance of visible girl offered here. The book is categorized, admittedly, into such sundries as the ETs, robots, space-ships, weapons, and architecture of the Future, and delegates only 20 specific pages to "Women Of The Cosmos." Withal, it is a highly unlucky browser who can open this book to any two facing pages of which one won't feature a damsel fitted with an inordinate complexity of secondary sex characteristics, and a corresponding simplicity of costume. Of course, no one can deny that this pulp stuff wasn't originally larded with cheesecake, but still and all, the publishers are manifestly hoping for a fat pick-up percentage from gentlemen whose primary interest lies not in science-fiction memorabilia, but something else. In this sense, the book is very nearly worth eight bucks.

But hopefully it'll sell well, for the sake of M. Sadoul, and in a larger

Bill Terry sketched this affectionate blo for Berkeley Livingston's "Death of a B.E.M." (Bug-Eyed Monster to you) in AMAZING STORIES, October 1948

Sitting through a pile of recently published terror tomes in search of a suitable book for staff curmudgeon Dean Latimer to review, we finally decided on Jacques Sadoul's 2000 A.D.: ILLUSTRATIONS FROM THE GOLDEN AGE OF SCIENCE-FICTION PULPS, reasoning that Dean would find nothing mean to write about a book comprised almost entirely of pictures. Unfortunately, we underestimated the depth of Dean's spleen, as you'll see in the less-than-loving review that follows...



Above, a Virgil Finlay scene from H.G. Wells' THE TIME MACHINE in FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES (August 1950); below, that same artist's illustration for FANTASTIC ADVENTURES (November 1952). Neither were found in the book's "Women of the Cosmos" section



Jacques Sadoul's 2000 A.D. Too much cheesecake for our critic's taste

sense for the sake of hack-writers in general. It must have been a lot of fun to put this together, and no great sweat, either. Exclusive of the picture captions, there are only some dozen pages of body copy in the book. Here the best of the featured illustrators are bled, and the obvious critical points are made: how hopeful the future looked back then, how ridiculously anthropoid all the ETs generally were, how astonishingly little erotica there ever was in the stories as compared to those luscious visuals. There is not much more anybody can say about these pictures, except to maybe wonder why so few of today's overpaid illustrators can do anything close to the stuff these artists did for pennies. (Item. We learn here that Virgil Finlay, the best of the lot, died broke in 1971, of cirrhosis, no less



As for Sadoul's captions, they read rather suspiciously like the table-of-contents blurbs that hyped the original stories. Example, a visual for Murray Leinster's "The Man In The Iron Cage" (Startling Stories, Nov. 1947): "A horde of 'things' from space has invaded Earth. Here one of them is sucking the blood of a sleeping young woman. Jim Hall, a discredited scientist, is humanity's only defense against this threat." As Ed McMahon would say, everything you'd ever want to know about that picture is summed up completely in just 34 words.

So here's hoping the book sells big, and creates a demand among publishers for more of the kind. This is the sort of stuff you can write dead drunk.







**TMT 1. COLLECTOR'S CLASSICS.**  
Our special premier issue containing part one of "The Man Who Saved King Kong," "NOSFERATU DER GÖLE" and "BUCK ROGERS." Also included is a Ben Wrightson Frankenstein color poster and Wrightson's NOSFERATU comic strip.  
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**TMT 2. SPECIAL STAR TREK EDITION.**  
Our first all STAR TREK edition, featuring the Star Trek Saga, interview with Will Am Shamer, profile of Leonard Nimoy and story on Gene Roddenberry. Also Gary Morrow's Star Trek color centerfold, STAR TREK comics.  
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A book of bug classic THEM! Bugs in the Corners by Mary Wootman. The film by H. G. Wells. Back cover: "The Munch" by H. G. Wells. "The Munch" by H. G. Wells.  
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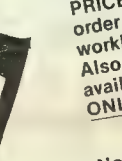
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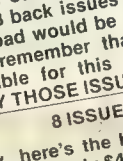
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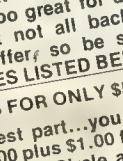
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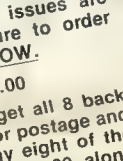
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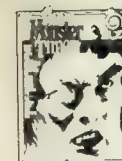
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**TMT 23. THE FRANKENSTEIN.**  
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**TMT 24. THE FRANKENSTEIN.**  
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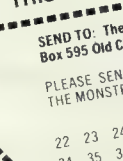
**TMT 25. THE FRANKENSTEIN.**  
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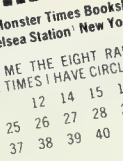
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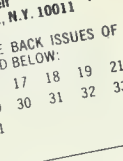
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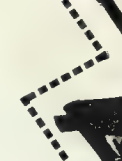
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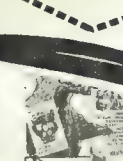
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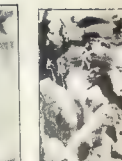
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# A MONSTER TIMES HONG KONG HORROR PREVIEW

Long considered the unchallenged King of the Kung-Fu Film, Hong Kong movie mogul Run Run Shaw has recently decided to toss his hat into the horror-sci-fi ring as well. While the films have yet to be released in this country, TMT Media Editor R. Allen Leider made ample use of his Chinese connections to bring us the advance low-down on **SUPER INFRAMAN** and **BLACK MAGIC**, Shaw's first forays into the SF and horror genres...

**R**un Run Shaw has long been the undisputed King of the Kung-Fu Circuit, having produced more martial arts pot-boilers than any other single producer. While it's true no awe-inspiring epics have emerged from his studios, the dollars have been following Shaw's magic draw for years, and he now seems determined to branch out into even greener pastures—the Science Fiction and Horror genres.

His first two efforts in these areas will soon be seen on screens across the country. Until such time as the films are shown, judgment must need be reserved on whether "Made In Hong Kong" means the same on a fright film as it does on an electric appliance, camera or watch. While we can't as yet offer critiques of these films, we can unveil some plot lines and scenes from **THE SUPER INFRAMAN** and **BLACK MAGIC**. So here is TMT's very own Chinese Special, one from column A (Sci-Fi) and one from column B (Horror).

## COLUMN A: THE SUPER INFRAMAN

A dormant volcano suddenly erupts, releasing mysterious monsters under the



**SUPER INFRAMAN** (Li Hsiu-hsien) draws bead on unseen adversary in a scene from Kung-Fu King Run Run Shaw's sci-fi film of the same name

control of creatures from the Ice Age, who have been living in the bowels of the earth for lo these many millennia. Led by the "Demon Princess" (Terry Liu), the monsters launch a brutal campaign to destroy the human race and take over the planet (aren't their any monsters with more modest ambitions—like raising a family or getting a decent job?).

Meanwhile, after many years of hard work, Professor Liu Ying-te (Wang Hsieh), the director of a satellite research station, has succeeded in completing the blueprint for the transformation of a human being into an indestructible superman capable of seeing and hearing for a distance of many miles and of destroying anything that would dare get in its way.



# THE NEW CHINESE CHILLERS

BY R. ALLEN LEIDER

What Makes Run Run Shaw? The usual, we're afraid, Mr. Shaw's sudden yen for the fright film genre appears born of a desire to see a yen or two in return

When it becomes all too obvious that the monsters are impervious to bullets, a young scientist named Ray (Li Hsiu-hsien) asks Prof. Liu to transform him into just such a superman, the better he might save the human race from imminent annihilation. Ray then becomes the **SUPER INFRAMAN** of the title and sets out to eliminate the murderous monsters.

In the meantime, Chu Ming, another young scientist from the research station, has been captured by the Demon Princess and converted into a robot. She then sends the transmogrified youth back to the research station to steal the Super Inframan blueprint and bring it to her. In short order, Prof. Liu and his daughter Mei-mei (Yuan Man Tzu) are captured and detained by the Demon Princess. Super Inframan rushes to their rescue, but by this time the Demon Princess has studied the blueprint and knows how to counteract the deadly infra-ray. She attacks Super Inframan with ice gas—which effectively freezes his mechanical devices—but Ray remembers the professor's instructions for just this contingency. Within seconds, he melts the ice and attacks his foes, killing the monsters and the Demon Princess, and saving Prof. Liu, Mei-mei and the rest of the world from certain destruction.

As you can see by the above description, little attention is paid to scientific realism in the film, which has obviously been designed as pure escapist fare. Producer Shaw opts for men in monster suits rather than animated creatures, and his traditional lack of budget may seriously hurt the film. We've witnessed only a handful of horror films over the past decade that have successfully surmounted severe budgetary problems, with George Romero's **NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD** coming foremost to mind. But that film didn't require much moola, lacking, as it was, in elaborate special effects. Oh well, we'll just have to wait and see but, as for me, I have my doubts that **SUPER INFRAMAN** will fill the sci-fi bill.

## COLUMN B: BLACK MAGIC

Hsu Lo (Ti Lung) and Wang Chu-ying (Lily Li) are engaged to be married, but sexy widow Lo Yin (Tann) makes a play for Hsu Lo, and is sorely disappointed when he rejects her amatory advances. Meanwhile, one Liang Chia-chieh (Lo Liem) hankers for Lo Yin's charms and seeks the help of a Bomoh (Chinese shaman) named San Kan Mi (Ku Feng) to cast a spell, but is instead killed by the Bomoh for failing to pay the promised price. When Lo Yin discovers how the late Liang managed to seduce her, she contacts the same Bomoh and buys a spell which will win Hsu Lo's heart.

Sure enough, Hsu Lo develops an instant fondness for Lo Yin immediately after downing a love potion prepared by the inventive Bomoh. Naturally, Hsu's be-

trothed, Wang Chu-ying, is very upset by the nonchalant attitude he adopts toward her. Meanwhile, the magician not only schemes to off Hsu Lo and Wang Chu-ying, but also plots to take advantage of Lo Yin while she is under his evil influence. As a last resort, Wang Chu-ying's trusted friends, Uncle Kuan and Wei Tchin, secure assistance from another old Bomoh (Ku Wen-Tsung) who promptly heals both Hsu and Wang and restores their former love for each other. San Kan Mi, the bad Bomoh, seeks revenge on Hsu Lo when it dawns on him that a greater magician has been called in to break his wicked spell, but San himself is done in before he's able to put his perverse plans into effect.

This occult entry by the Shaw group seems to be a rather predictable, if somewhat confusing, witchcraft tale. Again, the acting and dubbing will play a large role in determining the film's failure or success. The plot borrows elements from traditional Chinese erotic classics, with Gothic shacks thrown in to make the product more appealing to Western audiences. At least we learned a new word, for our ever-expanding Gruesome Gloss.



Evil Bomoh (Ku Feng) keeps ahead of his opponents in a violent vignette from **BLACK MAGIC**, a horror film that mixes elements of traditional Chinese erotic lore with more modern Gothic grue.

sary: Bomoh—a Chinese shaman, or witch. Whatever the ultimate worth of **SUPER INFRAMAN** and **BLACK MAGIC**, it is heartening to learn that filmmakers in other parts of the globe are branching out into the realms of science fiction and horror. Perhaps the Chinese will offer a fresh slant on the horror/sci-fi genres, genres that only too often fall prey to the predictable. Let's hope so, anyway.

**SUPER INFRAMAN** confronts low budget monster in another moment from the Shaw sci-fi film *The Hong Kong producer's previously prodigious profit-turning powers will be put to the test with these, his first forays into the fright film genre*







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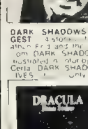


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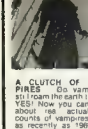
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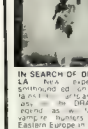
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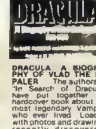
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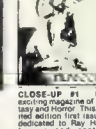
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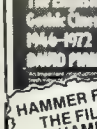
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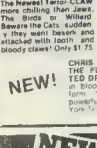
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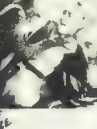
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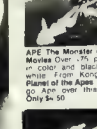
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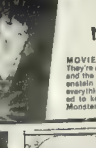
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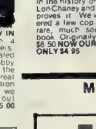
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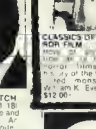
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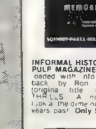
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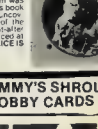
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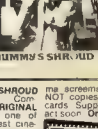
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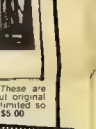
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## The Monster Times

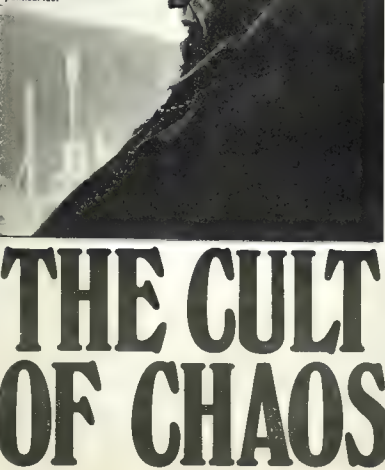
While Art and Life have been aping each other ever since man first made a distinction 'twixt the twin, rarely has there been a case of fiction becoming fact as bizarre as the Cult of Chaos phenomenon, where a science-fiction novel inadvertently supplied the game plan for a group of political revolutionaries. We dispatched TMT political observer Rex Weiner to investigate the strange transformation of sci-fi scribe Norman Spinrad's AGENT OF CHAOS into a bible for radical politics, and the results of his eerie inquiry follow...

In approximately the 24th century, mankind populates the entire solar system. On every planet, from the icebound rock of Pluto to the broiling surface of Mercury, gleaming domed cities are inhabited by busy Wards who process the raw planetary resources into the vast economy of the Hegemony of Sol. Over all, the ten-man Hegemonic Council rules with ruthless tyranny through a system that, over the centuries since the major powers of the earth agreed to it, has come to be called "Order." In practice, Order means peace and prosperity at the expense of individual freedom; war, hunger, and disease have all been abolished through the careful and absolute supervision of every Ward from birth to death.

Only two things threaten the Hegemony, the first being a small band of subversive freedom fighters called the Democratic League. Headquartered in the abandoned, unpatrolled subway tunnels in what was once New York City on the planet earth, the League struggles in a valiant, but clumsy manner against the Hegemony, employing sabotage and guerrilla tactics to realize their ends. Although they name "democracy" as the cause they serve, not even the League's leaders can readily define that long-forgotten word.

The second threat comes from the mysterious Brotherhood of Assassins, a group whose random acts of violence seem mad, inexplicable, chaotic. With one hand the Brotherhood saves a Hegemonic Councilman from League death plot, and with the other they blow up an entire Hegemonic city. The Wards have come to regard the Brotherhood "like mental illness, or fate." The Hegemonic Council regards the group as "fanatics from the millennium of religion." The audience ranges from a segment of the prison population (who pass tainted copies from cell to cell) to a certain band of political revolutionaries called the Zippies (who successfully used the book as an action plan for disrupting

Sinister cover illustration from Norman Spinrad's AGENT OF CHAOS, the novel that inspired the bizarre Cult of Chaos, a curious case of science fiction becoming political fact



BY REX WEINER

the 1972 Democratic and Republican Conventions in Miami), to the pie-slinging Agents of Pie-Kill Unlimited (who have adapted the book's philosophy and created a nation-wide pie-for-hire craze). All of which is rather surprising for a 75¢ paperback that is out of print and difficult to find!

Which is, of course, often the case with science fiction. "AGENT OF CHAOS is a classic example of fantasy transformed into prophecy. In the book, Russia, China, and the Western Powers join forces in a policy distinctly similar to the current politics of 'detente.' Amazingly (and perhaps frighteningly), during President Ford's recent trip to China, the word 'hegemony' played a key role in the official pronouncements. An additional example of fiction-turned-fact is how the sophisticated eavesdropping complex described in AGENT OF CHAOS has been revealed to be not far removed from the surveillance techniques used by the U.S. government to keep dissident citizens under thumb.

## POLITICAL PAST

Politics have always played a part in Spinrad's work. He began penning a political column for the old Knight Magazine in California in 1967. In 1970 he began writing for the Los Angeles Free Press, one of the original "underground" newspapers, and eventually joined the split-off group that formed the short-lived Staff. His novels include (in chronological order): *The Solarians* (Paperback Library, 1966), *The Men in the Jungle* (Doubleday, '67), *AGENT OF CHAOS* (Belmont Tower, '67), *Bug Jack Barron* (Walker, Avon, '69), *The Iron Dream* (Avon, '72), and his only non-sci-fi novel, *Passing Through the Flame* (Berkeley/Putnam, '75). For *Bug Jack Barron*, Spinrad was awarded the Prix Apollo in France for Best Science Fiction Novel of 1974, and plans are currently afoot to turn it into a major motion picture. A Hugo Award nomination also went to Spinrad for a STAR TREK episode he wrote called *The Doomsday Machine*. He has written an episode for the *LAND OF THE LOST TV* series as well, which was titled *Tag Team*.

It is AGENT OF CHAOS, however,

that seems to have captured the political imagination of Spinrad's many fans. The parallels between the book and the development of radical American politics were first cited and taken advantage of by the group which, in late 1971, split off from the Youth International Party (Yipie), and called themselves "Zippies."

"The first I heard of it was at a party in the fall of '72," recalls Spinrad. "These maniacs were there and somebody pointed them out to me as Zippies, and then somebody pointed me out to them, and the next thing I knew they were swarming all over me, telling me all these things they'd done because they'd read AGENT OF CHAOS. I thought it was fine, you know, just so long as they didn't take the book too literally and start assassinating people."

The Zippies never went so far as assassination, but the group did use the book as a basic analysis of the political situation at the time. AGENT OF CHAOS depicts a struggle between an Establishment and an anti-Establishment (the Hegemony versus the League), which the Zippies translated into the contemporary struggle between the Democratic Republicans and the anti-war Movement. In AGENT OF CHAOS, the League loses continually because they fight the Hege-

mont's rendition of a character from THE DOOMSDAY MACHINE, a popular STAR TREK episode scripted by prolific Mr. Spinrad.



mony in a predictable way. In a sense, the League becomes necessary to the Hegemony because the group provides a relatively safe, controllable outlet for all the randomly subversive elements in the population who might otherwise pose a threat to the Hegemony's Order.

The Zippies saw a similarity in the predicament of the Movement: it had become too predictable with its marches, its demonstrations, leaflets, petitions, slogans, etc. By being predictable, said the Zippies, the Movement had become ineffectual. What was clearly needed (according to the example set by AGENT OF CHAOS) was a third force.

So the Zippies modeled themselves after the fictional Brotherhood of Assassins. In Spinrad's book, the Brotherhood's guiding philosophy is contained in *The Theory of Social Entropy*, by Gregor Markowitz, who wrote "Every Social Conflict is the arena for three mutually antagonistic forces: the Establishment, the opposition which seeks to overthrow the existing Order and replace it with one of its own, and tendency towards increased Social Entropy, which all Social Conflict engenders, and which, in this context, may be thought of as the force of Chaos."

It was in this light that the Zippies saw themselves as a "third force," "Agents of Chaos" whose aim was to break up the highly ordered and predictable scheme of events. In practice, this meant launching various forms of physical and propagandistic attacks on both the conventioning Democrat/Republicans and the opposing Movement, generally causing random havoc in both camps. The strategem was successful enough to earn the Zippies the bitter hatred of both sides.

## CHAOS PAVES WAY FOR PIE-KILL PLOTS

Another group which has become fanatically devoted to AGENT OF CHAOS is the one known as "Agents of Pie-Kill Unlimited." The mysterious "Chief Agent," whose headquarters are in an enormous empty warehouse in midtown Manhattan, admits that the group's name, and even his own title, are taken directly from Spinrad's novel.

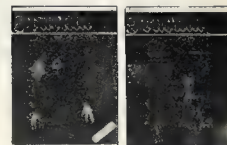
"The book is our Bible, absolutely," declares the Chief Agent. "Although the public knows us mainly for the fact that, for a fee, our agents can be hired to throw a pie at any victim the client chooses, what the public doesn't know is that we have a political aim, and that aim is to promote random chaos throughout the world, so that never again will fascism gain a grip on people's lives. If someone had thrown a gooey lemon meringue pie in Adolf Hitler's face, perhaps all of history might have been different. By helping people act out their crazies' fantasies, we are helping to keep society stirred up and unpredictable, so that no tyrant will ever be able to control it."

While the unwitting instigator of this wild cult is intrigued with the stir his novel has unintentionally caused, he does seem to view it with a tinge of dread. Says Norman Spinrad, "I will continue to write fiction, and science fiction, but I accept no responsibility for the consequences of the novel or the cult thereof. Which is not to say I disown what I write. It's just that, well..."

And there he left the sentence to fall where it may. His current project is a novel about being a science-fiction writer (to be titled *Five Cents A Word*) which presumably will include the experiences Norman Spinrad has encountered with the raging Cult of Chaos he so innocently inspired.

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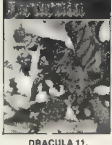
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SEE PAGE 31 FOR ORDERING AND POSTAL INSTRUCTIONS.



Since most of your fiendly TMT staffers are dead-in-the-wool listomaniacs, we spend a goodly amount of our rare spare time compiling various cinematic lists—10 Best lists, 10 Worst lists, even 10 Most Average lists. And since we find this pursuit an endlessly entertaining one, we decided to institute a semi-regular TMT feature that would see recognized right film critics and workers comment on THEIR celluloid favorites. To kick off our critic's choice feature in this sci-fi-slanted edition of TMT, we asked science-fiction filmmaker-critic J. Hoberman—a frequent contributor to ARCADE and THE VILLAGE VOICE—to give us his favorite films.

**W**e live in Science Fiction Land. A tour of any suburban supermarket, not a ritual visit to see 2001 visioned out of one's mind, is the real "futurist trip." The fluorescent lighting, the soothing muzak, the "happy gas" atmosphere, the dazzling array of "scientifically" packaged chemical foods, the fact that the whole spectacle of zombie consumerism is being monitored on closed circuit TV, adds up to a total experience that cannot even be approximated on film! O.K., so we land a man on the moon. (What, no cat women????) Astonishing, yes, but also a little anticlimactic. After all, Walt Disney, mighty mogul of the robot world—had always assured us that we would evolutionarily be on the moon before 1970. What was really stunning—and it was something that Hugo Gernsback never dreamed of—was that everyone in America was home or in a bar watching the live

## MY 10 FAVORITE SCI-FI FILMS

(AND WHY I LIKE THEM)  
BY J. HOBERMAN



from-the-moon-show [with guest m.c. Richard Nixon].

Many people prefer viewing science fiction to sci-fi movies. I disagree! Because what is science fiction really? I think that science fiction is a way of saying that if we're meaning the human race, Western Civ. or America—depending on the politics of the writer) continue like we are Now, then we will end up like This (an exaggeration or obliteration of the Now). So, science fiction is really always talking about the Now—even if it does so through a complete retreat from reality! That is why I like the movies better than the writing, because the movies really do take place in the Now. They are kind of like history, like time capsules of obsolete futures or parallel universes.

### METROPOLIS.

1. **THIS IS THE BIRTH OF A NATION** is science-fiction films. Pauline Kael once called it "the craziest film ever made." **METROPOLIS** (1927) would be a classic for the sets alone—a kind of futuristic New York City where the Empire State Building is a millionaire's "house" and where all the workers are forced to live in the subways. Political ly, **METROPOLIS** is very inter-

esting as a clue to the mental state of pre-Nazi Germany.

2. A rich stew of pulp, comic strip, and movie stereotypes, the serial **FLASH GORDON** (1939) is also full of Ecce. (It was my favorite TV show as a kid.) As you all know, it involves the adventures of Flash on the rogue planet Mongo and ends when he has finally bested the Emperor Ming—a mad Oriental who has malevolently steered Mongo on a collision course with Earth.

Mongo is a wonderland of TV sets, dinosaurs, unicorn gorillas, pretty girls, ray guns, flying cities, and **METROPOLIS** like slave-factories. The whole in spired cast acts with total conviction (amid plot twists of complete absurdity) in the best tradition of Bela Lugosi and Maria Montez. Russia made **ALEXANDER NEVSKY** and Hollywood countered with **FLASH GORDON**.

3. Howard Hawks' **THE**

**THING FROM ANOTHER WORLD** (1950) is also one of the greatest action films ever made. It was, I think, the first science fiction film to be set, not in the Future or on Mongo, but in the Now. A fast-talking tribe of U.S. Air Force men (complete with feuding factions, courtship rites, and Scotty the Homeric news paper reporter) stationed at the North Pole save earth from conquest at the hands of a blood-sucking carrot. **THE THING** seems almost like it was made to give a crash-course in teamwork and species survival.

4. **THE NEXT VOICE YOU HEAR** (1950) is a film in which monumental pretentiousness, the complete absence of humor, unbearable slowness, a senile director and all the other liabilities of the MGM house style are virtues. Like **THE THING**, it is set in the post-World War II/nuclear bomb Apocalyptic/paranoid Now. But this time it is no mere vampire vegetable that visits earth. The film is about the ponderous as tempts of an average American Joe and his family to cope with a week-long series of fireside chats given by God over the radio. A happy ending though—God digs the American "way of life!"

5. A wackier, more enjoyable mutant of **THE NEXT VOICE YOU HEAR** is **RED PLANET MARS** (1952), which escaped from United Artists at the height of American cold-war hysteria. When a cute couple of American astronomers pick up radio signals that are seemingly transmitted by God from his home on Mars, the world is stunned. The plot thickens insanely as "God" turns out to be a drooling Nazi scientist broadcasting from a radio shack in the Andes. Nevertheless, the Russian people, at least, accept the transmission as bonafide, and, led by the Orthodox Church, they overthrow the Communist Party. (This, by the way, is Solzhenitzyn's wish come true!)

6. Typical of the cooler, more alienated films developed during the reign of President "We Can Tough Out A Nuke" Kennedy is Ray Milland's little gem, **PANIC IN THE YEAR ZERO** (1962). The film is perfectly suited to fit the science-fiction ambience of a drive-in movie theater. It follows the life of a typical fifties sit-com family in the hectic days that follow the hydrogen bomb annihilation of Los Angeles. An alternate title might have been **FATHER KNOWS BEST VS. THE NUCLEAR HOLOCAUST AND ITS RADIOACTIVE DELINQUENT SPAWN**.

7. The masterpiece of the drive-in sci-fi flicks is **CREATION OF THE HUMANOIDS** (reputed to be Joe Kane's favorite film). Here, moldy Danish modern sets, a somnambulist camera, and inept acting serve to comment on the script's deadpan satire of American fears (including racism and automation). Contains the all-time great alienated line: "You mean my sister is 'in rapport' with a chicken?!"

8. In 1965, Jean-Luc Godard shot a film in modern-day Paris, gave it a hardboiled pulp plot, and called it **the Future**. It has no sets, and driving along on the freeway is, in **ALPHAVILLE**, the equivalent of being "lost in space."

9. and 10. The last really good sci-fi film that I've seen was in a porno theater in Binghamton, New York. It was an attempt to mix sex and science fiction, just like **FLASH**, and later, **FLESH GORDON**. **SPACE THING** (1968) was so cheaply made that the film's producer, David Friedman, used the gadgets in his own kitchen to simulate a rocket control room! When I saw **SPACE THING**, I realized at last the citizens of **METROPOLIS** were beginning to talk back to their TV sets. Consequently, I made my own sci-fi cheapter: **CUSTOMS & IMMIGRATION**. You may not believe this, but it is an underground film that is as angst-ridden as **PANIC IN THE YEAR ZERO**, as alienated as **CREATION OF THE HUMANOIDS**, as turgidly poetic as **THE NEXT VOICE YOU HEAR**, as baroque conceptual as **RED PLANET MARS**, and far tackier than any John Agar film!



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It is indeed mind-boggling to look at the list of filmmaking "firsts" that belong to Georges Melies. And it's all the more satisfying to us fantafilmfans to realize that he made these advances when he was working in (and to a certain extent because he was working in) our own realm of the fantastic film.

In fact, Georges Melies **invented** the fantastic film. He may even have invented the fiction film. And the first fiction film may well have been a fantasy!

In the late 1890s, when the movies were the "movings," filmmakers were putting together 50-foot epics like **SEA WAVES**, **A TRAIN ARRIVING AT THE STATION**, and **VENICE—SHOWING GONDOLAS**. Later, they graduated to vaudeville acts like the infamous **COOCHIE-COOCHIE DANCE**, starring the belly-dancing Fata. News events were also popular, like the boffo **THE KAISER REVIEWING HIS TROOPS**. Great stuff, nein?

#### ENTER MELIES

At the time films first began to appear, Georges Melies was already in show business. He was managing the Theatre Robert Houdin, a Paris vaudeville house devoted to stage magic. (Robert Houdin was an 18th century French magician from whom Houdini [Eric Weiss] took his name.) After seeing some of the early film efforts, Melies decided that he, too, was a filmmaker. The Lumiere Brothers, whose films he had seen and who were the only auteurs in France at the time, refused to sell Melies the goose that laid the celluloid egg. So the resourceful Melies built his own camera from parts supplied by G. William Paul, an



Man in the moon receives unexpected poke in the eye with a sharp rocketship in famous scene from Melies 1902 **A TRIP TO THE MOON**, generally regarded as the first science-fiction film ever made.

time in those days. He invented the feature film! Of course, he didn't go around saying, "I've invented the feature film!" But if these advances hadn't been made when they were, we might have had the first sound film around 1942.

It was in 1899 that Melies had his first epic in the can: **CINDERELLA** in 20 scenes. Originally, **CINDERELLA** was to have run 2,000 feet, but the distributors cut it to 410 feet. Apparently distributors have been the same throughout recorded history.

By then, Melies had the first studio, a glass-roofed affair with trapdoors and various blinds and other magical mechanics from his Theatre Robert Houdin days built into the stage. He also had as many as 50 workers **hand-coloring** the prints of films from his production company, Star Films. The first color movies...

#### FIRST

#### SCIENCE-FICTION FILM

The first SF film, **A TRIP TO THE MOON**, was made in 1902. A 920-foot masterpiece, it is typical of Melies' quaint style of filmmaking. The rocket is a bullet shot from a cannon. The moon is played by a chorus girl in tights sitting on a crescent. The constellations the astronauts dream of one day conquering are symbolized by girls in Grecian garb bearing torches. *A very stagey trip to the moon, yes?*

Indeed, this is Melies' main failing. He was too theater-based to take advantage of film's truly filmic storytelling techniques. He never cut in different angles from the same scene, for example; the viewer is always fixed in a front row center seat. In another ten years, Melies was

#### BY S. A. STAR

What SF edition of **THE MONSTER TIMES** would be complete without a nostalgic look at the film pioneer credited with making the very first science-fiction films? Rather than squander precious time pondering that brain-bending query, let us delve straightaway in S. A. Star's mini-biography of French filmmaker Georges Melies, the Founding Father of the Sci-Fi Film.

Melies singlehandedly invented most of the camera tricks we take for granted today—slow and fast motion, animation, minia- tures, the fade, the dissolve, multiple exposures and the use of mattes. He had the devil popping in an out of a scene chasing some hapless shnook around the room; he made a man meet his double; he made a man's head enlarge; he even had a man with **four heads**.



Melies himself took the part of a swell-headed magician in another of his early efforts. While cinematically primitive, Melies expanded the special effects repertoire of film by adapting his inventive bag of theatrical tricks to the screen.

English inventor and filmmaker.

He started off recording the usual everyday scenes and some of the acts that played his magic house, but in 1896, after no less than 70 such films, he made something called **THE VANISHING LADY**. The film was just a vignette wherein a magician makes a woman vanish before your very eyes, with the simple trick of stopping the camera and having the woman exit the scene, then starting the camera again... Gosh! Amazing! But such was the screen's first special effect. A Wizard! A True Star! A Cosmic Event! A Genuine Special Effect, by Georges!

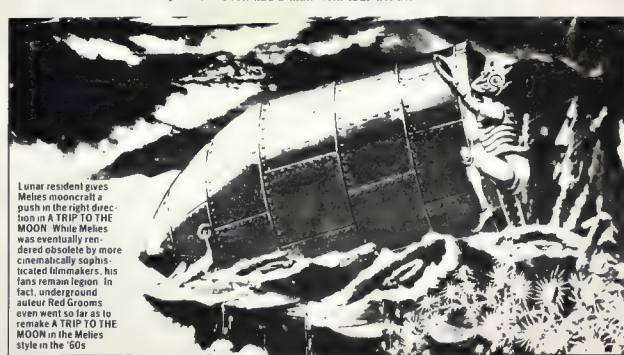
The story goes that Melies was filming an ordinary street scene in Paris when his camera jammed. After fumbling with it, he resumed shooting. When he later examined the film, he was startled to see an omnibus change into a hearse! If this story is true, then the fantasy film owes its conception to an accident, and a decidedly happy one at that.

Melies followed up his pioneering with **THE VANISHING LADY** with **THE HAUNTED CASTLE**

(1897), adding moody sets (!) to his expanding repertoire of special effects.

#### MAGIC OF MELIES

Over the next few years,



Lunar resident gives Melies mooncraft a push in the right direction in **A TRIP TO THE MOON**. While Melies was eventually rendered obsolete by more cinematically sophisticated filmmakers, his fans remain legion. In fact, underground auteur Rod Grooms even went so far as to remake **A TRIP TO THE MOON** in the Melies style in the '60s.



Lunar explorers prepare to take off for a fanciful **TRIP TO THE MOON** in a craft very similar to one earlier sketched by science fiction writer Jules Verne.

Everybody else was still making movies about ocean waves. But Melies wasn't content to stop at vignettes.

He lengthened his films to 2,000 feet, an unheard of running

to seem antiquated compared to his contemporaries.

However, at the time, **A TRIP TO THE MOON** grossed plenty, and Melies followed it with even longer and more elaborate films, like **THE IMPOSSIBLE VOYAGE** (they went to the sun this time) (1904), **20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA** (1907) and **CONQUEST OF THE POLE** (1912). The total list is pretty extensive, as Melies turned out over 500 films between 1896 and 1913.

By 1913 the audience had outgrown Melies' 19th century style and the result was bankruptcy for Star Films. Melies himself pulled a disappearing act and was forgotten until a journalist discovered him in 1929 selling candy in a railroad station! There followed a Melies revival in which Georges himself participated. He was given the Legion of Honor, his country's highest award, plus a small pension. He died in a rest home at the age of 77.

Georges Melies was the pioneer film fantasist and remains an example to all filmmakers present and future.



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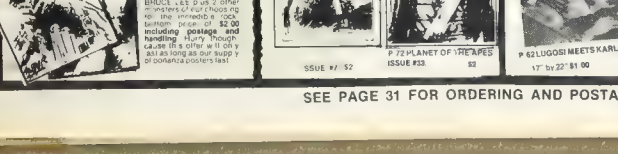
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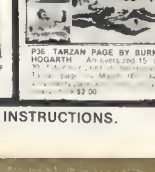
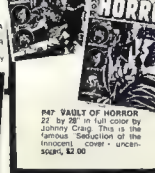
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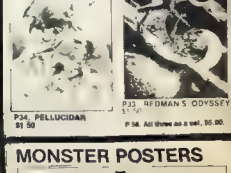
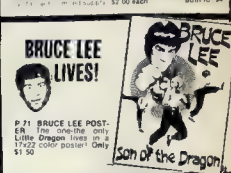
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## COLLECTOR'S Master Times



## BRUCE LEE LIVES!





# The Monster Times



Unlucky astronaut finds himself lost in space in **THE PHANTOM PLANET**, Dell's comic book adaptation of William Marshall's 1961 SF film of the same name. Comicdom has been cutting itself in on the sci-fi film action for over a quarter of a century.

The British satire **MOUSE ON THE MOON**—sequel to **THE MOUSE THAT ROARED**—returned to earth as a Dell comic in 1963.



the colorful little people, was wearing his equally famous Big Red Cheese grin.

In 1953, Dell Comics put out **CONQUEST OF SPACE**, based

on Pal's semi-documentary science-fiction film, and six years later issued **TOM THUMB**, with an intriguing cover photo of star Russ Tamblyn being held up in the "plant" hand of a normal-sized human being. Pal's now-classic version of H.G. Wells' **THE TIME MACHINE**, starring Rod Taylor and Yvette Mimeo, followed in 1960 as another Dell movie comic.

**ATLANTIS, THE LOST CONTINENT** (1961), with Anthony Hall, Joyce Taylor and John Dall, has been Dell's last George Pal movie comic to date, although the following year Gold Key Comics offered an adaptation of Pal's **WONDERFUL WORLD OF THE BROTHERS GRIMM**. An interesting footnote to the **ATLANTIS** comic is that many theater managers gave free copies of it to the first one or two hundred kids to see the film at their showplaces. I know, because I got my own copy on opening day at the Wilmett

Theater in L.A.I.

## SIMIANS SWING INTO FOUR-COLOR FORMAT

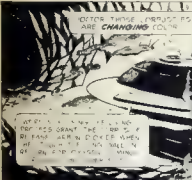
Pierre Bouille's **PLANET OF THE APES** not only spawned the entire series of Apes films (5 in all) and a short-lived CBS-TV show, but at least one movie comic and then a regular series of Apes magazines published by Marvel.

In 1970, Gold Key issued **BE NEATH THE PLANET OF THE APES**, the second entry in the Apes film series, in a movie edition. Then, in 1974, Marvel obtained the comic-book rights to Apes, and started publishing a large-sized, dollar, black-and-white comics magazine. Titled simply **THE PLANET OF THE APES**, Marvel's magazine has featured not only an illustrated retelling of the extremely successful Apes movie stories, but also their own sequels to the final Apes epic, **BATTLE FOR THE**

When Fawcett Comics published George Pal's **DESTINATION MOON** as a special movie edition in 1950, the company unknowingly helped to launch the birth of science-fiction comics in general. Previously, companies like Fiction House had been publishing **PLANET COMICS** since 1940, and **FAMOUS FUNNIES** had been reprinting the Buck Rogers newspaper strips of the 30s and 40s, but it really wasn't until 1950 and **DESTINATION MOON** that the genre of science fiction took a firm grip on the comics publishing industry—even as the enormous success of the Pal film also inspired Hollywood to "discover" science fiction, and then produce film after film after film in a barrage of sci-fi entertainment that hasn't let up to this day.

Almost immediately after **DESTINATION MOON**'s instant suc-

cess, comic-book publishers everywhere began issuing literally dozens and dozens of their own sci-fi comic titles. Avon, for example, began publishing **OUT OF THIS WORLD**, **FLYING SAUCERS** and **STRANGE WORLDS**, among many others, while National released **STRANGE ADVENTURES** and **MYSTERY IN SPACE**. The first issue of **STRANGE ADVENTURES** (August 1950), in fact, featured **DESTINATION MOON** not only on the cover, but also as a short story adaptation inside the magazine, and marked the only time in movie comics publishing history that two different companies brought out their own individual comic adaptations of the same film.



A panel from Gold Key's adaptation of 20th Century-Fox's **FANTASTIC VOYAGE**, a 1960 sci-fi film that saw Raquel Welch and crew get under the skin of an alien scientist and cross the "last frontier."

# SCI-FI MOVIE COMICS



sported a startling color cover depicting the savior rocketship about to blast off from earth amidst a fiery holocaust. Fawcett shortly dropped their entire comic-book line, however, and it was Dell comics who continued publishing George Pal movie comics for the next eight years.

Fawcett, though, had earlier published eighteen issues of **GEORGE PAL'S PUPPETOONS**. The comics were based on a series of stop-frame animated, color theatrical shorts that Pal had been producing in the 40s. The cover of Fawcett's first issue of **PUPPETOONS** (December 1945) featured not only the famous Pal puppet characters, but also the world-famous Captain Marvel, who, surrounded by

Russ Tamblyn as last a helping hand on the cover of **TOM THUMB**, Dell's comic adaptation of the George Pal film. Pal has long been a favorite of movie comics moguls; his **DESTINATION MOON** became the first sci-fi movie comic ever back in 1950.

**THE THREE STOOGES MEET HERCULES** described that slapstick trio's travels to Ancient Greece, a chapter that apparently has been written out of most mythological texts. Dell released the comic in 1962.

**PLANET OF THE APES**, released in 1973. The Marvel magazine also contains photo-illustrated articles on the making of the films, interviews with actors and technicians, and other interesting production data on both the Apes films and TV series.

Other science-fiction movie comics have included Dell's editions of **THE MOUSE ON THE MOON**, **SANTA CLAUS CONQUERS THE MARTIANS** and **DR. WHO AND THE DALEKS**. A sequel to **THE MOUSE THAT ROARED**, with Peter Sellers, **THE MOUSE ON THE MOON** was released in 1963 and depicted the tiny nation of the Duchy of Grand Fenwick entering the space race, while **DR. WHO AND THE DALEKS** was a comical feature film with Peter Cushing that was based on a highly popular children's program aired on England's BBC-TV. America's own Three Stooges got into movie comicdom with their own titles in 1962, when Dell put out **THE THREE STOOGES MEET HERCULES** and **THE THREE STOOGES IN ORBIT**. The former was a time-travel tale, with the Stooges meeting not only Hercules but monsters like the Twin-Headed Cyclops to boot. The other titles described the Stooges' insane flights in a Rube Goldberg-type atrap and was an especially unique movie comic in that the entire book was illustrated not with artwork but actual stills from the film. Something like that hadn't been done since 1939, when National published an adaptation of **SON OF FRANKENSTEIN** in **MOVIE COMICS** #1.

Coming Next!  
**WEIRD FANTASY MOVIE COMICS!**  
Don't Miss It!



# The Times Teletype

is our way of getting the latest hot-off-the-press wire info to you, serving up all the news of what's cookin' in every medium, from the rare to the half-baked to the well-done - reviews, previews, bulletins and controversial comments on horror, sci-fi and fantasy happenings in films, books, comics, TV and even real life. We have spared no costs, time or tender egos in bringing you this expanded edition of our beloved Teletype page, so feel free to send us letters full of lavish praise for our zealous efforts to keep you "in-the-know." Handling Flight Film Forecasting chores is "Breezy Bill" Fare, who kicks off this feature with his column, which begins directly below.

**S** seems the films of the future will be dominated by comic-strip heroes, disaster pics and more demonic adventures. Lately joining the already under way Italian **CAPTAIN ELECTRIC** and the British **DAN DARE** will be Universal's **SHENNA, QUEEN OF THE JUNGLE**, starring the very "Jungle-queenish" if there ever was one Raquel Welch. Remember those doleful dooskins in **ONE MILLION B.C.?** Will they shoot on Hollywood and Vine?

There also seems to be two legit productions being readied in England on none other than the original **Apeman** himself: **TARZAN** and a musical thersabout called **WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO CAPTAIN INCREDIBLE**.



## THE FEAR OF THE YEAR IS HERE! DR. BLACK MR. HYDE A MONSTER HE CAN'T CONTROL... HAS TAKEN OVER HIS VERY SOUL!

That busy little bunch at Dimension Pictures will also be presenting us with **DR. BLACK MR. HYDE**, starring Bernie Casey and Rosalind

Cash. Guess what he changes from and into?

Lorimar Productions is preparing a four-hour television special of Flora Rheta Schreiber's superb classic of schizophrenia, **SVIL**.

Columbia is putting a lot of \$ and effort into their forthcoming sci-fi opus called **CLOSE ENCOUNTER OF THE THIRD KIND**. They've also got scheduled a murder romance titled **EYES**.

Back to the Disaster Epics, newly joining is a "Bridge-Out-Express-Train-Survivors" film called **THE CASSANDRA CROSSING**, with an all-star cast top-lined by Sophia Loren, Richard Harris, Ava Gardner, Ingrid Thulin, O.J. Simpson and Burt Lancaster.

**AT THE EARTH'S CORE**, Edgar Rice Burroughs' classic of inner world prehistoric Pellucidar, has wound up lensing at Pinewood Studios in London. Doug McClure, also star of **AMICUS' LAND THAT TIME FORGOT**, shares top billing with Peter Cushing and beautiful Caroline Munro, late of **SINBAD'S GOLDEN VOYAGE**.

The aforementioned Dimension Pictures add the stellar title of **EGG-PLANTS FROM BEYOND TIME** to their growing number of losers.

A plague of lusting blood-worms attacks a small town in a pic bearing the wonderfully descriptive title of **SQUIRM**.

## 18 feet of gut-crunching, man-eating terror



**GRIZZLY**, starring Christopher George, Andrew Prine and Richard Jaeckel, should see release around the end of March.

The Cannon Group will be releasing such little-known efforts as **THE NORTHVILLE CEMETERY MASSACRE**, **BLOOD FEAST** and **BLOOD BATH**.

Back at MGM, things are certainly prosperous. They have the rights to and an eye on doing Tolkien's **LORD OF THE RINGS**, as well as **THE DEMON SEED**, possibly starring Julie Chris-

tie. **THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR** will star Yul Brynner in a future New York reduced to savage and primitive conditions by pollution.

Spangler Productions plans to film an independent horror thriller called **SNOWMAN** Pic will lens on location in Aspen, Colorado.

And a filmization has been announced of Lindsay Gutteridge's saga of ecological terror and mini-monsters titled **COLD WAR IN A COUNTRY GARDEN**.

AIP's announced sequel to **WESTWORLD** is currently in production and should be ready for worldwide release come the summer. Entitled **FUTUREWORLD**, the film is being directed by Richard Heffron and stars Peter Fonda, Blythe Danner and Arthur Hill. Yul Brynner will also return as the gunslinging robot from the original.

The same company will be producing Bert I. Gordon's production of H.G. Wells' classic **THE FOOD OF THE GODS**, starring Ida Lupino, Pamela Franklin and Marjoe Gortner. Plans have been put into effect to resurrect that marvelous TV series, **THE AVENGERS**, starring the imperious Patrick Macnee and the Emma Peel to end all Emma Peels, Diana Rigg.

Irwinn Allen plans a new sci-fi entry in the TV Sweepstakes called **THE TIME TRAVELER**, sort of budding forth from his previous tube effort, **THE TIME TUNNEL**.

Dimension Pictures has a peculiar double bill in **THE HEAD HUNTERS** and (ready...?) **NURSES FROM MARS**. Beware the flowers that bloom in the Spring. In May, **NIGHTMARE GARDEN**, a sci-fi horror anthology edited by Vic Ghidalia comes due. The Manor Books paperback features stories by Ray Bradbury, Robert Silverberg, Frank Herbert, Kit Reed, Frank B. Long and Donald Wandrei writing about "the day the plants took over."

AIP will produce, along with Hanna and Barbera, a live action super-spectacle version of **Dante's Inferno** called **DANTE'S TRIP**. This will be a rock effort, though not a full-out musical, and they hope to have a rock star of the same magnitude as Elton John or Paul McCartney as star. Also on their schedule are two sci-fis entitled **CEREBUS I** and **THE LUPEZOID**.

Columbia has set **SINBAD AND THE EYE OF THE TIGER**, starring Patrick Wayne and assorted Harryhausen wonders, for Easter 1977 and promises more Sinbad flicks to come.



MGM will be shooting an updated musical version of **MEPHISTOPHELES**, with an original score by Australian Simon Heath.

And last but not least, there will be 24 new episodes of **SPACE: 1999** for sci-fi-starved tube-watchers. Hope they'll keep us going till Paramount and Roddenberry can get together on the new **STAR TREK**. Let's go, Gene we can't wait forever.



## A TALE OF TWO KONGS

The latest, and hopefully last, word on the heretofore ongoing Great **KING KONG** Remake Rights Dispute has it that the combatants, Paramount and Universal, have resolved their differences. As things stand now, both will return the King of Skull Island to the silver screen, but Universal will not release its version until 18 months after the Paramount film is finished. Paramount, in conjunction with producer Dino De Laurentiis, will base their remake on the original film and

set it in modern times; Universal will adapt theirs from Delos W. Lovelace's novel (itself based on the original film) and set it in 1933. Stars lined up for the Paramount remake include Jeff Bridges, Charles Grodin and Jessica Lange, though reportedly the company originally sought Al Pacino, Gene Hackman and Faye Dunaway for the leads. Much of this info is doubtless still subject to future change, so keep watching TMT for updates on this bizarre Tale of Two Kongs.

## CON-CALENDAR

THE CON-CALENDAR is an exclusive feature of TMT. Across the country, comic nuts, at fairs, monster meals and the like are constantly gathering to buy, sell, trade, collect and listen to speeches. As with most gatherings of fans, the conventions often

border on the insane, but the people are friendly and there's always a good chance you'll pick up some rare item for your collection. And they're great places to meet people—famous, infamous and plain unknown. If you've never been to a "con," we highly recommend you try one. They vary in size, emphasis, and quality, of course, but they're all fun to attend. We at TMT will do our part by keeping you informed of all upcoming cons.

DATE	CONVENTION	LOCATION	PRICE	FEATURES
June 4, 5, 6	A SPACE CIRCUS	INTERNATIONAL AMPHITHEATRE Chicago, Ill.		Star Trek Stars, Rock Concert, 6-Hour Anna Show
July 9, 10, 11	1ST ANNUAL STAR TREK EXPO OF WASHINGTON, D.C.	HYATT REGENCY 400 New Jersey Ave. Washington, D.C.	4/16 thru 6/15 \$14.00 6/16 thru 7/9 \$18.00	Trivia Contest, Masquerade, Etc.
Sept. 2, 4, 5, 6	STAR TREK BI-CENTENNIAL 10	STATLER HILTON New York City		Guest Stars, Movies, Spook-Look-Alike Contest
All 4th Sundays After Jan.	COMIC BOOK COLLECTORS MARKET	STATLER HILTON HOTEL (Ray State Road) Park Square Boston, Mass.	\$1.00 Per Info Call (Brookline) 583-6777	Comic Books, Science-Fiction, Movie Items, Etc.
3rd Sunday every month	NOSTALGIA 4 Church Street Waltham, Mass. 02154	Howard Johnson Motor Lodge	75¢	comic books, puppets, toys, movies, auctions



SF TV  
MOVIE  
ROUND-UP

Here to keep us up-to-date on some of the terror tube's more interesting sci-fi movie offerings is SF scholar and inveterate TV-watcher Jason Thomas...

## GENESIS (1973)

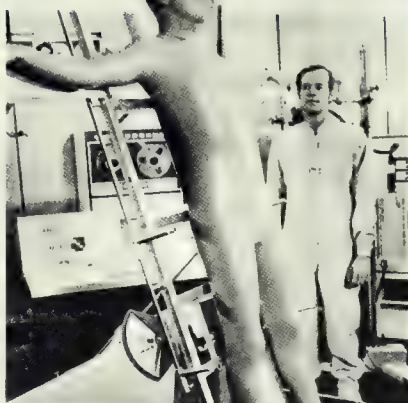
Roddenberry (without whom STAR TREK would not have been) really bombed with this, since it's not much more than an updated version of BUCK ROGERS, and has nothing to offer except for its infrequent special effects. The plot is boring and dumb, and the ending is awful. A scientist accidentally remains in suspended animation for several hundred years. When he is revived, he discovers that a nuclear war has wiped out our civilization. However, oddball societies have sprung up all over the world, including one run by nasty, human-hating mutants. The good guys, who are known as "Par-peace), are real duds, so how good can things be? Had this become a series, it might have been worse than STARLOG (oy).

## THE STRANGER (1973)

Another sci-fi pilot that didn't make it. The plot somewhat resembles that of JOURNEY TO THE FAR SIDE OF THE SUN, but this TV flick is much more complex. Glenn Corbett plays one of three U.S. astronauts who crash-land on a duplicate earth. There are various differences between the two planets and their inhabitants, though. For instance, the other world has several moons. It also has a well-ordered totalitarian society, which is why the space travelers are marked for execution. It's rather good, but the fugitive already made this scene.

## DEMON, DEMON (1975)

This eerie but slow-moving drama is one of the better offerings of ABC's *World of Mystery*. The premise here is that demons do exist, but that they came to earth from another planet in another galaxy. The unstable heroine's features and personality are altered by the evil ones, and she proceeds to seduce her husband while in her other form. Ironically, her good half suspects that he is having an affair with another woman (which he is, sort of). At the end of this possession flick, the couple (threatens) is saved when their unworried enemy suffers a fatal heart attack. Don't go out of your way to see this entry.



## THE QUESTOR TAPES (1974)

Hopefully, this excellent pilot film about an android and its human assistant will be awarded its own series. Handsome Robert Foxworth plays the alien-devised humanoid whose mission it is to keep humanity from self-destruction. He can be stopped by bullets, and he lacks experience and emotions. Though naive, he has all of Earth's knowledge in his memory banks. In addition, he is super-strong, and his "life-span" is 200 years. The theory is that if mankind survives for that length of time, it will have matured beyond its destructive tendencies. Hope for the best, morials.

## THE TWO DEATHS OF SEAN DOOLITTLE (1975)

This one is a real weirdo. Doolittle is a lonely man who faces a long jail sentence, so he commissions a scientist to freeze his body for a number of years, after which time he is supposed to be revived. Part of the ghoulish process requires that all his blood be removed before the cryogenic system becomes operational, and this is done. He is then placed in a freezer, but after a short time some villainous-type person raises the temperature and opens the storage locker. The crook comes to but turns into a deranged vampire because he is completely bereft of blood. Bullets can't stop him, but he gets his final end in the ever-dependable conflagration scene. This

ABC production is just weird enough to be worth seeing.

## DISTANT EARLY WARNING (1975)

A UFO lands near an isolated Arctic radar station, and the small military garrison is visited by aliens who appear to them as loved ones who had died. The new arrivals claim that they have journeyed from the wonderful Beyond to drop in on the soldiers, who fall for this unlikely tale. Within the next hour or so, nearly everyone is slain and, in the end, the telepathic aliens take over the base and prepare to invade earth. Ray Bradbury did this sort of thing a lot better a long time ago. The conclusion to the ABC-TV movie is okay, but the rest is forgettable.

## THE STRANGER WITHIN (1974)

Richard Matheson did a pretty fine job with this thriller about a young married woman who becomes impregnated by a ray from another planet. Naturally, her husband is quite upset by this, as well as by her strange behavior; at one point, he even threatens her with a very large knife. Doctors and hypnotists are called in to help, but in the end nobody is able to stop the (hopefully benevolent) aliens from making the woman and her child—along with other women and their semi-alien babies—board a spaceship and depart for the distant planet.

## THE UFO INCIDENT (1975)

This fine, but overly long (2 hours) NBC movie is based on a supposedly true occurrence. A married, racially mixed couple is driving along a dark country road when, suddenly, a UFO appears in the skies. Naturally (movie-wise, anyway), they stop and investigate. Aliens capture the pair and lead them to the spacecraft, where they proceed to examine the man and woman. Afterward, the people are made to forget the experience and are released. They remember everything later, through hypnosis, and the events are rather convincing. The acting and script are excellent, but too much time is spent on the victims' personal problems. See it.

done by students, some of whom will be getting their first crack at pro film-making. Brendan Faulkner (publisher of the new *Skull Killer* comics), Frank Farei (largely responsible for the hilarious short *The Incredibly Awful Dr. Sporgo*) and other young talents will be participating in the project. The special effects, including lots of table-top animation, are being directed by Chris Wedge and supervised by professional effects ace Simon Deitch, who formerly worked on *OUTER LIMITS*. Actors are just now in the process of accepting roles in the film. The first to sign on are Will Jordan—renowned impressionist famous for his Ed Sullivan impersonation—and Michael Sullivan, who has featured role in *GREASER'S PALACE*.

The project's aim is to give students professional credentials before they leave the academic scene without which there is really very little access to the film industry as it exists today. As the production winds its way toward completion, I will supply *THE MONSTER TIMES* with

exclusive progress reports on the student movement and madness that will doubtless befall us. The problem of what sort of film to make was never a problem to me. Horror is a genre proven and true, a treasure trove of technical possibilities. I had made one horror film before—the soon-to-be-released *SHRIEK-OUT*—and I became aware via that painful experience just how difficult reality is to pull off the mood-pieces we call horror films. Together than dramas, or westerns—both of which I've done. And as hard as comedy.

The film, I suspect, will be an important one, bridging for the first time the student and professional spheres. And I expect that, with what all the talent involved, it will be a good film as well. We'll have to wait till around Halloween to confirm or deny that contention, but in the meantime we'll be keeping you up to date with exclusive reports, interviews, stills, etc., of the project's progress. Wish us luck. —Roy Frumkes

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WESTCHESTER WEIRDNESS  
Unique New Film Project  
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All you devotees of monsters, madness, and TMT will be thoroughly delighted to learn of a momentarily eerie event which is currently unfolding in Westchester, New York. The first feature film ever undertaken by professional filmmakers in conjunction with a student apprenticeship program, the film, entitled *TALES THAT WILL TEAR YOUR HEART OUT*, is an anthology of horror stories revolving around a small graveyard that's about to be exhumed to make room for a new apartment building. I am producing the film and directing one sequence. Guest directors and writers so far set to do other segments include Wes Craven (writer-director of the infamous *LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT*), Delwin Boden (author of the Val Lewton classics *THE CAT PEOPLE* and *CURSE OF THE CAT PEOPLE*), Chuck Hirsch (producer of *GREETINGS TO HI MOM!* and *Al Kilgore*, creator of *BULLWINKLE*). Other sequences are being



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When TMT Editor Joe Kane informed himself that he would be putting together an all-science fiction edition of this publication, he immediately asked permission to pen a critique of his favorite SF film, Wesley E. Barry's **CREATION OF THE HUMANOIDS**. Giving himself the necessary go-ahead, he wrote the following, decidedly subjective account of that largely unsung sci-fi opus...

Following a brief burst of argumentative multilingual chatter, an explosion rocks the tiny soundtrack, a mighty stock footage mushroom cloud billows on the screen and, before the title credits have even rolled, civilization-as-we-know-it has had it. A properly dispassionate narrator tells us, "No one can be sure who started it, and, really, that is not important." What is (important, that is) is the irredeemable fact that the long era of human infighting has finally reached its ultimate climax, and that Man must now make way for his better half—Machine.

The setting for Wesley E. Barry's blackly comic **CREATION OF THE HUMANOIDS** is a reconstructed earth of the not-too-distant future. While Man still pulls the majority of strings in this low-budget Brave New World, his power is waning and most of the planet's tasks are performed by a variety of carefully programmed automatons. Said automatons—or 'clickers,' as they're disparagingly referred to by the reactionary humans who comprise the Klan-like 'Order of Flesh and Blood'—range from simple menial models to the more sophisticated R-70s (who possess perfect logic) up through the alpha-bet-voiced R-96s, who, we are informed, have all the logic of an automaton and all the emotions of a human, lacking only the ability to reproduce.

As the film opens, a pair of automatons are on their way to the 'Temple' to be recharged by what they designate as the "Father-Mother," an outsize computer complex that administers to their needs—when their progress is abruptly halted by the anti-automaton Craigus (Don Megowan) and a fellow officer in the Order of Flesh and Blood.



"I'll have your memory pulled so fast you'll NEVER forget it!" warns Craigus (Don Megowan), angry officer in the Order of Flesh and Blood, in early scene from Wesley E. Barry's slyly satiric **CREATION OF THE HUMANOIDS**.

A TMT Sci-Fi Flashback

## THE CREATION OF THE HUMANOIDS

BY JOE KANE

After harassing the inoffensive 'clickers' ("I think I'll keep you here till your power runs out," croons Craigus. "How would you like that?"), Craigus and cronies discuss, with such paranoid intensity, the growing 'arrogance' exhibited by the uppity automatons. What they don't know, however, is that a certain renegade scientist, one Dr. Raven (Don Doolittle), is in cahoots with a cabal of clickers bent on creating an illicit group of R-96s to infiltrate human ranks more out of a sense of inevitability than malice; it should be noted, it is right about here that the plot, as they say, begins to thicken, as the Order intensifies its efforts to oppress the robot majority, though the action remains wryly static throughout.

### STATIC CINEMA

In cinematic terms, **CREATION OF THE HUMANOIDS** is certainly less than flashy; in fact, it could have been shot on video-

tape without losing much, if any, of its perverse power. Almost totally verbal, this unsung sci-fi satire contains more memorable lines per minute than any similar genre outing we can recall. When, for example, cruel Craigus becomes engaged at a too-candid clicker, he roars, "I'll have your memory pulled so fast you'll never forget it!" In another scene, an automaton working with Dr. Raven asks the outlaw scientist why he's cooperating with them. "Money," comes the scientist's concise reply. When the robot allows as how he fails to understand that sort of motivation, Dr. Raven blandly suggests, "You should let me rewire you. You don't know what you're missing."

In what is perhaps the film's finest sequence, Craigus visits his liberal sister Esme, who, he's learned, is "in rapport" with a clicker, i.e., is living with an automaton—an R-9 named Pax—programmed to act as an

extension of herself and to respond specifically to her needs. When an angry Craigus rudely removes the robot's eyes and pulls a few wires from his arm, Esme declares, "Pax is more of a man than you'll ever be. He could never do to you what you just did to him." To Pax she adds, "Better put some sealer on that arm, dear."

Craigus softens somewhat when Esme's friend Maxine arrives to help her celebrate her newfound "rapport." Despite their vast ideological differences, Maxine and Craigus are immediately attracted to each other and leave Esme's abode together. Following their departure, the fully-repaired Pax, who's outfitted with a sense of humor, begins laughing uncontrollably, if mechanically. When asked what it is he finds so amusing, he chuckles, "Irony...one of the funniest forms of humor."

The film's rather inconclusive conclusion has it that Craigus and Maxine are themselves automatons, two of sixteen forbidden R-96s fashioned by Dr. Raven under the direction of several rebellious automatons. Both, it turns out, had died but were reassembled with all memory of their deaths erased. At film's end, Craigus undergoes an understandable change of heart—or, perhaps more accurately, batteries—regarding his attitude toward his mechanical brothers and accepts the inevitability of a world in which Man—the original model at least—has become obsolete.

### SPAWN OF THE HUMANOIDS

Though **CREATION OF THE HUMANOIDS** remains to this day a fairly obscure film, it quickly developed a small but devoted cult following headed by a clique of New York-based underground filmmakers. Andy Warhol once cited it as his favorite overground movie, and the Kuchar Brothers—a talented pair of Bronx auteurs who specialized in crafting sly parodies of some of Hollywood's sleazier efforts—even went so far as to film their own **CREATION**-inspired sci-fi epic **SINS OF THE FLESHAPOIDS**. Shot in 1964, the Kuchar film not only paid appropriate tribute to the earlier movie but was itself an excel-

lent, if campier, sci-fi satire.

Little is known about the creators of **CREATION OF THE HUMANOIDS**, but, since the film relies so heavily on its ironic script, considerable credit should surely go to go screenwriter Jay Simms. Simms, incidentally, also worked on the scripts for **THE KILLER SHREWS** (1959) and **PANIC IN THE YEAR ZERO** (1962), the latter an American Armageddon satire-melodrama that is not without its supporters. Even **THE KILLER SHREWS**, a fairly awful flick (see TMT #37), contained a few intentionally funny stabs at some of the fright film genre's more ludicrous conventions. As for director Barry, we have no idea what became of him.

With its admittedly static pacing, somnambulant acting and rather staggering lack of action, **CREATION** will no doubt put off sci-fi enthusiasts in search



A dramatic moment from the Kuchar Brothers' **SINS OF THE FLESHAPOIDS** (1964), a Bronx-based sci-fi satire inspired by **CREATION**.

of more robust futuristic fare. But if you allow yourself to succumb to the film's slyly ironic mood, the pleasure might very well end up being all yours.

**THE CREATION OF THE HUMANOIDS** (1962) Genie Productions, Inc. Directed by Wesley E. Barry. Screenplay by Jay Simms. Makeup by Jack Pierce. Starring Don Megowan, Frances McCann, Erica Elliot, Don Doolittle.



Martin Landau, as Moonbase Alpha Commander Koenig, holds on for dear life in a scene from **SPACE: 1999** and hopes that the series will do the same. Only time, TV ratings and toothpaste sales will tell.

**SPACE: 1999** CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

"I was a student in Curt Conway's acting school and Martin was my instructor," Barbara recalls. "I was infuriated by the way he used to criticize my work. Somehow that conflict resolved itself into a much more constructive emotion."

So much so that, after a 15-month courtship, Barbara and Martin were wed. "The marriage is a real 'fun' thing," says Barbara. "It's a 'hobby' sort of relationship. We enjoy each other very much. We enjoy each other's companionship. We're homebodies, we never get bored with each other and we still surprise each other from time to time. It's pure joy."

### THE IMPOSSIBLE SCENE

**MISSION IMPOSSIBLE** was probably the biggest boost to the Landaus' careers, granting them considerable media exposure. Barbara won three Emmy Awards for her super-spy Cinnamon Carter role on the show, and Martin did pretty well too, when you consider that his 80 **MISSION** stints began as a single guest appearance. Things might have continued in this happy vein were it not for contractual difficulties that arose between the show's producers and the stars in question. Hassles over money and number of appearances eventually prompted the pair to split the **IMPOSSIBLE** scene. Ironically, enough,

**STAR TREK** refugee Leonard Nimoy filled the slot vacated by Landau.

"The first years after I left **MISSION IMPOSSIBLE** were tough and go," Landau remembers. "I traveled over 100,000 miles in the first year alone, going from assignment to assignment in films and TV things. I was often away from Barbara and the kids for months. We then decided to look for something we could do together, but there was a dearth of good script material around. All the offerings were either cheapie rip-offs of successful shows or remakes of old, out-of-date things. It was at this time that friends of ours, Gerry and Sylvia Anderson, brought us the first outline for the **SPACE: 1999** series."

"It turned out to be a fantastic project," Barbara interjects. "Not just the Gerneich outfits and the special effects, but the cast, guest stars, the \$270,000-per-episode budget...the whole thing awed us. The crew was especially fun to work with...no friction. The tea breaks were fun too."

When the Landaus were filming **SPACE: 1999**, did it occur to them that they would be competing with **STAR TREK**?

"Of course," answers Barbara. "I think each series has its own merits. It's funny though, because when we were shooting **MISSION IMPOSSIBLE**, **STAR TREK** was shooting in the studio next door. That's irony for you."

If CBS buys the series, as has been

rumored, does that mean more new episodes will be filmed to supplement the 24 now in the can?

"Yes, probably," Martin opines. "We'll trot back to Britain and get back to Alpha. It would probably mean another six months or so, but it's fun and we love it."

### FUTURE OF SPACE

As the show went into its second year of production, some rather radical changes were implemented, the most surprising of which was the removal of the Dr. Bergman character (Barry Morse) from the series. Future installments of **SPACE: 1999** will develop new characters. One good turn is the news that an additional \$700,000 will be added to the 24-episode budget, bringing the next year's total expense to a whopping \$7.2 million bucks.

While the show has a long way to go to catch up with **STAR TREK**, there's a strong chance that **SPACE: 1999** conventions aren't far off. Already, merchandisers are pushing models of the Eagle transport, everything from an inexpensive do-it-yourself job to a \$14 metal model that does everything but fly. **SPACE: 1999** comic books are printed every month, and paperback novel versions of various episodes are crowding the shelves of many American bookstores.

If **STAR TREK** wants to maintain its position on the American sci-fi throne, it might not be a bad idea to get that proposed **ST** movie in the can sans further delay.



# FLASH GORDON

return to their own planet as soon as possible. Understandably, Flash and his companions distrust Ming. They decide to carry out their plan to fly to Sky City, so Barin leaves to fetch his rocket.

As the ship is being loaded, Barin is careless when he tells one of his men where the pick-up is. One of Ming's spies overhears this, and he leaves to report to the emperor. While this is taking place, Zarkov contacts Thun via the spacegraph. After a brief conversation, they agree to convene at Vultan's palace later on and, along with Aura, set out to meet their transportation. They take an underground passage to a point outside the city gates, and proceed from there to a deserted guardhouse tunnel.

Barin's aircraft is soon sighted, and the courageous group waits for it to land. Instead of setting down, however, the ship begins firing at them. It seems that Barin and his men are not in the rocket. Flash, Zarkov, Dale, Vultan and Aura run into the tunnel for safety. A moment later, the structure is blasted and a tremendous explosion takes place!

## 13. ROCKETING TO EARTH!

As luck would have it, Flash and his companions find a trap door and enter an underground tunnel just before the building is hit. Vultan was wounded in the initial assault, so they decide to return to the laboratory for a while. Along the way, they happen upon some enemy soldiers who are escorting Barin to the dungeons. A fight ensues, and the rightful ruler of Mongo is freed.

When the party arrives at the lab, Zarkov hooks up electronic devices to all of the doors. Torch soon leads a guard patrol to the locale, but he discovers that they cannot enter the room. Even rayguns prove useless against Zarkov's scientific ingenuity. Crafty Ming thwarts the heroes by ordering the lab's electricity shut off. Once more, Flash and his friends seem destined to become prisoners.

Suddenly, an alarm goes off. Ming hurries away, and Zarkov and his comrades flock around a spacegraph to learn the reason: The gyro-ships of the Lion-men are attacking the city again. Apparently, Thun got tired of waiting for the others to show up at the floating metropolis, so he went to get them. As Ming orders out his rocket fleet, he is confident that the invaders will soon be turned back.

While the air battle rages, Flash and company are taken to the throne room to await execution. It is not long before everyone realizes that Ming's ships are losing (which is sort of strange, considering what the Lion-men have to go through in order to operate one of their aircraft). The tyrant, angered by this turn of events, is about to order the deaths of his enemies, including Aura, when the invading army comes storming into the palace itself. In the resulting confusion, Ming escapes through a tunnel to the Sacred Palace of Tao. Flash, Barin, Thun and Aura follow, but they are too late to stop the evil one from entering the huge doors. As the High Priest closes the chamber, it appears as though Ming has been killed by a fire dragon. [Of course, he was not. Ming returned two more times, and it was strongly hinted at the end of the third serial that there would be another sequel. Alas, there was none.]

When order is restored in the city, Barin and Aura take command and the earthlings blast off for their own planet. Afterward, Barin learns that the crazy High Priest hid a time bomb aboard Zarkov's rocket. The space travelers are warned by radio, and Flash manages to find the device in the nick of time. There are no further incidents as the trio heads for earth and the honors that await them.

**FLASH GORDON** (1936) Directed by Frederick Stephani. Screenplay by Stephani, Ella O'Neill, George Plympton, B. Dickey. Based on the comic strip by Alex Raymond. Starring Buster Crabbe (Flash), Jean Rogers (Dale), Charles Middleton (Ming), Frank Shannon (Zarkov), Priscilla Lawson (Aura), Richard Alexander, James Pierce, Duke York, Jr., Richard Tucker.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

# METROPOLIS

The robot's synthetic flesh melted from the heat, and the people saw the folly of their rebellion. The metal figure continued to laugh until the merciless flames destroyed it.

Freder, having found Maria, managed to lead her and the children to safety. However, they were soon separated by the frightened crowds. Alone, Maria blundered into Rotwang! The scientist, fearing for his life, tried to kill her! In her mad flight, Maria climbed up to the cathedral roof.

Freder was on one of the streets below, searching desperately for Maria. He heard her scream, and he cast his eyes upward. Seeing the woman he loved, he ran to help her. He reached her in time, and during the ensuing fight with Rotwang, the mad scientist was knocked from the roof.

With Rotwang dead and the robot destroyed, the crowd calmed down a bit. By now, everyone who had not been killed had escaped from the lower levels. Homeless, sorrowful and angry, the workers confronted Jon Fredersen. They

knew that his son had saved their children, and they were grateful to Freder. But the Master of fallen Metropolis had to be reckoned with.

Maria wisely pointed out, "There can be no understanding between the hand and the brain unless the heart acts as mediator."

With that, Jon clasped hands with the foreman, and Freder and Maria embraced. From then on, everyone worked together to rebuild Metropolis, and all shared in the rewards.

## LANG'S LAVISH CLASSIC

**METROPOLIS** was made in Germany by UFA. Production costs proved so great that the company was forced to borrow large sums of money, even from some American studios. This paid off, though, when the film was released in 1927. The two-hour science-fiction classic was directed by Fritz Lang, from a script by Thea von Harbou, his wife, who also wrote the original novel.

The motion picture was also released in the United States in 1927, by Paramount. Aside from the fact that the titles in America were in English, the names of the main characters were altered. Jon

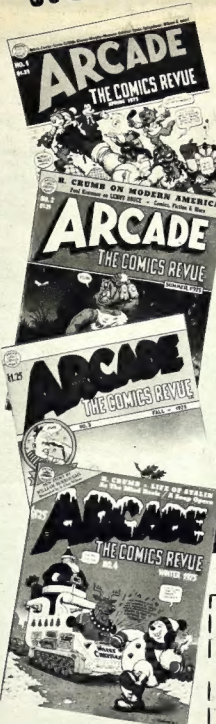
Fredersen (played by Alfred Abel) became John Masterman, Freder (Gustav Frohlich) was named Eric, and Maria (Brigitte Helm, who also played the robot twin) was translated to Mary. Rotwang (Rudolf Klein-Rogge) was allowed to keep his biblical title.

Metropolis was supposed to be the New York of the future. In 1924, Lang had taken a trip to Manhattan, and had been impressed by the city's skyline. After returning to Germany, he set to work on the costly classic. His technicians constructed elaborate miniature sets for the film, including a few with moving (on wires) planes, trains and autos. His special effects men created remarkable scenes, particularly the one in which the robot was given Maria's personality.

The film, which, in essence, is a sociological criticism of capitalism, is truly excellent, and not at all dated. There are many religious overtones, and Rotwang is depicted almost as a wizard rather than a scientist.

The motion picture is amusing, exciting and touching, and if you ever have the opportunity to see it, even if it's cut (which it usually is), do so. □

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# 5 OUT IN FEB.!!





Rotwang (Rudolf Klein-Rogge), a mad scientist in the employ of a cabal of equally crazed capitalists, prepares to create a mechanical Maria to sow discord among the downtrodden workers in METROPOLIS. Fritz Lang's masterful sci-fi classic.

Back in 1927, German auteur Fritz Lang lensed what many fans and critics still consider the very best science-fiction film ever made—the mammoth METROPOLIS. An allegory about capitalist oppression, the film is fraught with unforgettable images of hideous mechanical monsters, mad scientists, crazed capitalists...and even the workers are revolting. Here to fondly recall that silent classic is TMT fright film maven Jason Thomas...

The city of Metropolis was vast and magnificent, the greatest and most advanced city on earth. Most of its towering skyscrapers rivaled the Empire State Building of long ago, and some of them were quite a few stories taller.

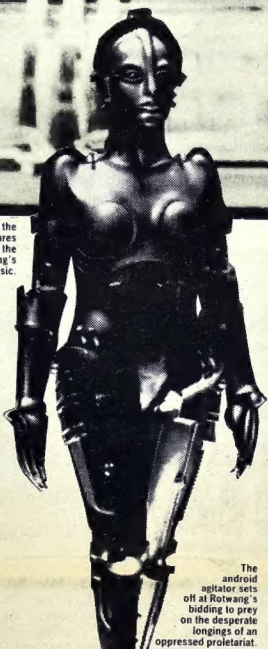
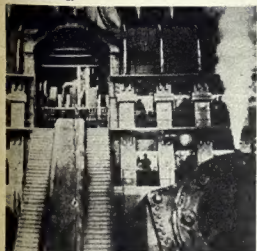
The population of Metropolis ranged in the tens of millions, but most of its inhabitants did not enjoy its wonders. More than half of the people lived and toiled below the concrete pavement. Rarely, if ever, did they see the sunlight.

The residents were divided into two classes. The upper class enjoyed the pleasures of the city, while the lower class serviced the huge machinery that made the city "live," metallic monstrosities located in the bowels of the earth, directly below Metropolis.

The subterranean workers were greatly oppressed. From birth, they had nothing to look forward to except the most miserable existence. Their grueling, 10-hour work shift sapped the men of little to no strength. The people had little to live for beyond a slender hope that all this would soon change.

Most of the upper class were unaware of the hardships the workers endured. Nor did they care. One day, however, Freder Fredersen, the handsome young son of the financial ruler of Metropolis, took an interest in the workers' plight. With the

**The Fun City of the Future?** While director Fritz Lang was doubtless inspired by his visit to New York, his METROPOLIS functions more as an Everycity, an insane extension of man's often morbid fascination with technology.



The android agitator sets off all Rotwang's bidding to prey on the desperate longings of an oppressed proletariat.

# METROPOLIS

BY JASON THOMAS

aid of another man, he descended to the level of the machines, and discovered the appalling conditions that existed there.

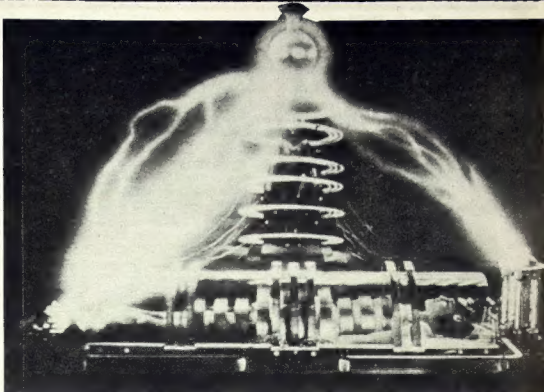
## WORKERS' FRIGHTS

As Freder looked on, a worker collapsed from fatigue. A moment later, the enormous machine that the man had been tending exploded. Men were hurled through the air by the force of the blast, and Freder, horrified, imagined that the machine was a living monster: all-consuming Moloch! As the dead and maimed were being carried off, Freder returned to the surface world and headed for his father's office.

There, Jon Fredersen stopped his work just long enough to tell Freder that he did not care about the workers. "Such accidents are unavoidable," he shrugged.

Determined to help the unfortunate ones, Freder returned to the level of the machines. He took the place of an exhausted laborer, and experienced the pains that resulted from the constant tending of the machines.

Meanwhile, the Master of Metropolis went to an ancient house. The single-story building, which was located between two stratoscrapers, was the home and laboratory of Rotwang, an insane scientist. There, the aged inventor displayed a feminine-looking robot to his esteemed guest, and Fredersen was amazed. "Now we have no use for living workers!" Rotwang announced, and Fredersen stared at the man's metal limb. While creating the automaton, Rotwang had lost his right hand in an accident.



All systems are unfortunately go, as Rotwang activates the evil apparatus that will transform an inert automaton into an exact duplicate of Maria, complete with her voice and memory.

Soon afterward, Rotwang led his employer into the catacombs beneath the city, arriving at a subterranean church, where a large number of workers were gathered. From a hidden vantage point, they listened to Maria, a beautiful female of the lower class, as she told the crowd the story of the Tower of Babel, then led her congregation in prayer. Unbeknownst to both men, Freder was among the enthralled listeners.

Fredersen, realizing that Maria was the workers' only symbol of strength, told his companion to fashion the robot in her image. "Hide the girl in your house," he instructed, "and I will send the robot down to sow discord among the workers and destroy their confidence in her." Then he left.

After everyone else had left, Freder approached Maria. They conversed for a while, and then parted. However, while the woman was returning to her home, she realized that someone was following her. Afraid, she began to run, but her pursuer—Rotwang—caught up to her and

ever, the creature managed to convince the angry workers to destroy the machines. With a will of its own, the robot led an angry mob toward the powerhouse.

They would not listen to reason. A foreman tried to warn them that if they tampered with the machines, their homes would be flooded. But they moved on, determined to destroy that which had enslaved them. When they reached their destination, the robot started the huge generator spinning faster and faster. The dynamo began to swell with massive electrical force, and then it exploded!

Meanwhile, Maria had escaped from Rotwang's abode. She fled to the underground city, but as soon as she arrived, water began flooding the streets. In the great square, Maria attempted to help the many children who were trying to flee from the rising tide. There were no other adults in the vicinity; they were occupied elsewhere, storming the powerhouse. The buildings started to collapse around them as they tried to escape. The workers' city was doomed!

Francis, Maria ran over to a large circular gong and sounded the alarm. Everyone on the level heard it, and the mob at the powerhouse turned away in fear. They began running toward their homes for safety, and the waters rose higher.

Freder, having learned of the disaster,



At the mercy of the mad Rotwang, the now-naked Maria (Brigitte Helm) becomes the ultimate sacrifice to the anti-life, machine-dominated ultra-Molochian METROPOLIS.

dragged her off to his house.

Later on, Maria was stripped naked and imprisoned inside a tubular apparatus; the robot sat in a metal chair not far away. Rotwang activated his electrical apparatus, and brilliant halos appeared around the immobile automaton. This process transformed the robot into an exact duplicate of Maria, complete with her voice and memory.

## AND A ROBOT SHALL LEAD THEM

Jon Fredersen approved of the mechanical twin, and ordered it to undo Maria's work. The android obeyed, entering the catacombs and preaching words of despair. Unknown to Fredersen, how-

soon reached the doomed level. He searched for Maria, but could not find her amidst the confusion and destruction. Word spread quickly. In the city above, Freder's father worried. "Where is my son?" asked the Master of Metropolis.

In response, an assistant stated, "Tomorrow, thousands will ask that question."

Some of the workers fought their way to the surface level. Urged on by the same foreman who had warned them earlier, they found and seized the robot Maria. While the android laughed, it was tied to a pole in the center of the cathedral square. Debris was gathered, and a fire started.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28



1871

## A close-up photograph of the fore-edge of a book. The image shows the binding material, which appears to be a light-colored, textured cloth or paper, and the edges of the pages, which are slightly discolored and show signs of wear. The book is resting on a dark, textured surface.

## This image shows a blank, aged, cream-colored page, likely an endpaper or flyleaf of a book. The paper has a slightly textured appearance with some faint smudges and discoloration, characteristic of old paper. The left edge of the page is bound into a dark, textured material, possibly leather or cloth, which is visible as a vertical strip on the left side.

1



